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Newton, Mass,

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THE PEOPLE'S  
**HISTORY OF ESSEX,**

COMPRISING

A NARRATIVE OF PUBLIC AND POLITICAL EVENTS IN THE  
COUNTY,

FROM THE EARLIEST AGES TO THE PRESENT TIME;

THE HUNDREDS AND BOROUGHES;

WITH

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES OF THEIR ANTIQUITIES AND RUINS,

THE

SEATS OF THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY,

AND AN

EPITOME OF THE PAROCHIAL CHARITIES.

By D. W. COLLIER.

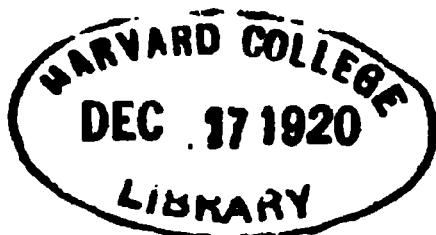
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William Endicott, Jr.*

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE purpose of the **PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF ESSEX**, we hope, will speak for itself. The chief object has been, as we stated at the outset, to present "a popular and historical picture of the county from the earliest ages to the present day,—its political and social changes,—the wars and struggles of which it has been the scene,—the races by which it has been overrun,—the great families who have owned or still own its soil,—its castles, antiquities, remarkable churches, charities, and government."

The History of the County had been a sealed book to the many. This seal, which bore the impression of two or three sovereigns—the price of the bulky tomes upon the subject—it has been the endeavour to break; and the sale of the work, as it has appeared in monthly numbers, assures us that we have been to a great extent successful. We flatter ourselves that we have opened a new mine of information for thousands—at least some thousands, we know, have already explored it—and have been able to give readable interest to facts and events which naturally appear dry and uninviting. The aim has been to impart a popular tone, wherever the matter would admit of it, to the pages of the **PEOPLE'S HISTORY**, giving just enough of any general public and political occurrences to explain the motives and illustrate the movements of the local actors; and thus convey to the Essex reader an idea of the interesting and hoary memories that cling to the soil on which he lives, and the part which his county has taken in the events, the triumphs, and struggles of the past. In pursuance of this object, we have traced the old paths and trodden over much new ground. Nearly every ruin and relic of importance in the county has been visited. The old halls have been explored. The modern homes of the

nobility and leading gentry have been entered ; and pictures, feeble, perhaps, but faithful, of their interior, as well as their outward and architectural character, are presented. The dusty genealogies of perished houses have been cast aside, save where the names of individuals are found in them who have influenced events in the county ; but the histories of men of celebrity, and of living families of note, have been carefully traced. The PEOPLE'S HISTORY may thus lay claim to originality and a character of its own.

It would be unbecoming not to acknowledge the ready and valuable assistance received in the progress of the work—the courteous freedom with which the gentry threw open their doors, and, where necessary, the records of their families, to the inquirer,—the promptness with which the Clergy replied to the numberless applications made to them for information on parochial matters,—the aid rendered by several members of the Essex Archæological Society, and the information drawn from the rich store-house of the published works of the Society itself.

Since the work has been in the course of publication, death has made some changes in the halls and homes of the county. The noble Lord Braybrooke has just been suddenly smitten down in the princely house of Audley-End. His brother, Charles Cornwallis, the heir presumptive, was born in 1823, and married in 1849 the third daughter of Viscount Hawarden.

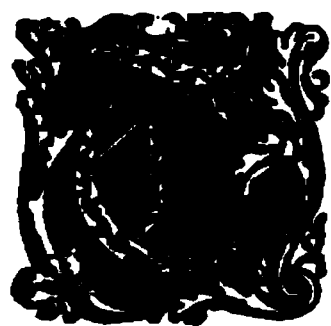
The benevolent Bishop Murray, too, has passed to the tomb, and the Episcopal Palace of the See of Rochester (described page 238) is now the home of the Right Rev. Dr. Wigram, who was consecrated to the diocese in 1860, and is the ninety-sixth Bishop of the See. His Lordship is the son of the late Sir Robert Wigram, and was born at Walthamstow in 1798 ; he married in 1837 the daughter of Peter Arkwright, Esq., of Willersley.

# THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF ESSEX.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTY UNDER THE ANCIENT BRITONS—ITS EXTENT, RIVERS, ASPECT, AND SOIL—ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE BRITONS—THE DRUIDS IN ESSEX.



THE History of Essex in those early ages when the pen was little used, and the press was altogether unknown, presents few features to distinguish it from the general history of the country. Yet from the occasional glimpses we catch of it in the fragmentary records of that olden period, it appears to have been of some importance even from the time when the foot of the first settler penetrated into its dark forests. Its soil and situation, and still more its proximity to the coast and the spots where adventurers from the continent in search of plunder or a new home were likely to land, brought it under the notice of the successive invaders, thus making it the scene of their struggles, and, as they consolidated their conquests, of their settlements. And here we cannot, standing on the threshold of its history, contemplate the present aspect of the county,—its high cultivation, displaying in all directions the skill and labour of the agriculturist, who has cleared the wilderness, and has stocked the once impassable marsh with cattle or clothed it with waving crops even up to the verge of the Thames,—its busy towns and thriving villages, with their sacred spires peeping out of clumps of trees upon the hill-tops or resting quietly in the vallies below,—the mansions which stud the landscape, either bearing about them some venerable traces of the past, or displaying the taste and genius of the modern architect,—the free access afforded to all its parishes either by road or rail,—we cannot look upon these without remembering that when the ambition and craving rapacity of the Roman first brought him to our shores, he found the whole one vast wild, beautiful, no doubt, though not so rich as we now see it, in the early spring and brightness of summer, but rough as nature left it. If he had taken his stand on Laindon or Danbury

hills, or the high lands about Thaxted, a woodland scene would have appeared extended before him of which he could see no limit, and through which he must have forced his way with difficulty as through a newly-discovered land. Inhabitants there were indeed, for even in the time of the ancient Britons Essex is stated to have been well peopled. Their dwellings, which were mere huts, formed of poles cut from the forest, and covered with skins, thick boughs or turf, might be seen in the thickets. Clustered into collections, as the shelter or surface of the ground suited, without order or arrangement of streets, these hovels formed their towns. The inhabitants themselves, hardy and athletic, might be seen bounding after the game in their native woods,—for the original Essex men, like all uncivilized tribes, were great hunters, and there were no game laws in those days; or tending their cattle, or engaged in the partial cultivation of patches of soil—rocking the cradle, as it were, of our present full grown Agriculture. In the mild season of the year the Briton would be found naked, his body painted or stained with the forms of flowers, trees, and animals.

“The painter, not the tailor dress’d him out,  
For grand assembly, gala-day, or rout;  
Green down the breast, and purple, brown, and black,  
In graceful mixture curving up the back;  
Hoops, blue and red, encased the legs below;  
A coat of varnish finish’d off the beau.”

When the snow came he changed this light summer wear; and was covered in winter with the skins of beasts. Such was the state of the county at that period—such the picture of our ancestor when we are first introduced to him by authentic record.

This being the aspect of the county when we first catch a view of it through the dim telescope of tradition, it may be convenient here to take a glance at its present condition. By slow degrees, as successive conquerors passed over it, the wild wood gave place to the enclosed and cultivated field, and the tracts of heather were subdued by the spade and the plough. For ages after the time of the ancient Britons its boundaries were undefined and its name uncoined. In the earlier Saxon times it acquired the title of East-Seaxa, which was changed by the Normans into Exsessa, and has since been modernized into Essex. At that period it comprised precisely the district, including part of Hertfordshire and Middlesex, which up to the ecclesiastical change a few years ago formed the diocese of London. It was not till the time of Alfred that its limits as a county were set out and defined, and these have continued its boundaries down to the present day. Its extent

from east to west, that is from Walton-on-the-Naze, which juts out at that point the farthest into the sea, to Roydon, on the borders of Hertfordshire, is rather over 61 miles; and from Bartlow Hills, on the edge of Cambridgeshire, on the north, to Tilbury Fort, on the south, it measures about 50. Its circumference, taking the capriciousness of its landmarks and the windings of its waters, is 225 miles. This tract, within which are included 420 parishes, 976,000 acres of arable, meadow, waste and forest lands, and 369,318 inhabitants, is almost enclosed by water. The Thames, occasionally jutting its creeks some distance inland, bounds it on the south; the German Ocean washes it to the east. On the north the Stour, rising near Haverhill and forming a mere, which gives name to the parish of Stourmere or Sturmer, passes by Clare, Sudbury, Nayland, Dedham, and Manningtree, emptying itself into the sea at Harwich; and on the west the Stort loses itself in the Lea at Roydon, and its waters pass on to Waltham Abbey and Barking. Other important rivers intersect and water the county. The Colne flows from Ridgewell along the rich valley of the Hedinghams, to Halsted, the Colnes, and Colchester, and swelled by tributary brooks mingles its stream with the sea between Mersea and St. Osyth. The Blackwater, or Pant, rises from a well at Radwinter, joins a small stream which has its source at Debden, and runs through Bardfield, Bocking, Coggeshall, Kelvedon, by Wickham Mills, to Maldon.\* The Chelmer has its source at Henham, and its course is through Thaxted, Dunmow, Felsted, and the Walthams to Chelmsford, where having given its name to the town it is united to the Cann, and turns eastward to Maldon. The Crouch originates in two springs at Little Burstead and Laindon, and taking a direction eastward divides Dengie and Rochford Hundreds, joining the sea below Burnham. The Roden has its birth at Little Easton, and passing through the important agricultural district to which it gives its name, reaches the Thames by Ongar, Ilford, and Barking. These rivers, with numberless little nameless brooks, that run bubbling along the low grounds, watering fertile tracts of meadow land, flanked by rich corn fields, occasionally intersected by belts of woodland, give to the county a different aspect to that expected by the stranger who has formed his opinion from old report. Essex does not, indeed, present the picturesque beauty of the west, and the bold contour of some of the northern counties; neither does it fatigue the sight

\* This river appears to have been navigable at one period far into the county. At Wimbish, we are told "there hath been in times past a pretie water, and in such quantities that boats have come from Billie-Abbeie, beside Maldon, into the Moore, in Radwinter."

with the almost unvarying flatness and uniformity of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. There is no rude mountain or barren crag to give what has been called "the charm of desolation" to the scene. There is scarcely an acre, save of its forest lands on the north and west, and a few scattered commons, which, either by stealthy encroachment or legal enclosure, have been gradually disappearing, that has not been rendered productive. Cultivation has been carried to the highest hill tops. But amidst its gentle undulations of hill and vale, some high lands stand out in bold relief, and afford platforms which command a fine extent of surrounding country. On the summit of Laindon Hills the prospect on a clear day in summer is admitted to be one of the finest in the kingdom. The view stretches over the vale of the Thames almost from London to the Nore, the river being commanded for an extent of nearly forty miles, with the bold hills of Kent as a back-ground to the picture; and it has been said that in summer, when the lands below are covered with verdure, nothing can exceed the beauty of this scene, "unless that which Hannibal exhibited to his disconsolate troops when he bade them behold the glories of the Italian plains." At Little Baddow, at Brentwood, and near Thaxted and Epping, delightful views may be also obtained by those who love to look upon rural scenery, rich with farm and woodland, and studded here and there with village and hamlet.

It is, however, chiefly upon its Agriculture that the importance and reputation of the county depend. Its wheat always figures at a good price in the records of Mark-lane; and its hay, straw, vegetables and milk, are poured in largely, especially from the southern and western divisions, for the supply of the great metropolis. Various writers have dwelt upon its fertility. Drayton in his *Poly-Olbion* (1580) after singing the forests and rivers of the county, rejoices that

"Essex is our dower, which greatly doth abound  
With every simple good that in the isle is found."

This brings us to the constitution and character of its soil. This is so variable in different districts that it is impossible to assign to it any general description. The Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, when such an institution existed, was driven in his survey to class the greater portion of the county under the head "miscellaneous soils." A writer in 1772 says—"Essex is a county in many respects inferior to none; from the pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, the conveniency for water carriage, and the goodness of its roads, it derives advantages few others can

boast." Chamberlayne, in his *Magnæ Britanniae Notitia*, nearly a century and a half ago, observed—"The soil in some places is so rich that after three years bearing saffron, it will bear good barley for almost twenty years together without dunging"—a description, we fear, that few of our modern farmers find borne out in practice. The good old itinerary must have been hoaxed, or have fallen in with some experimentalizing Piper of former days, who, like him of Colne Engaine, had the secret of growing five quarters of wheat per acre year after year without the aid of the muck cart or the plough. A recent practical writer (Mr. R. Baker, of Writtle,) describes the soil as resting in general on chalk as the substratum, which crops out at Saffron Walden on the north, and at Grays on the Thames on the south, at both of which places there are extensive lime works. The upper soil and subsoil consist of gravel, loam, clay, sand, &c. in admixture, many portions of which show that great disturbance by the action of water has taken place. About Chelmsford the soil is for the most part very good, and well adapted for the production of turnips as well as grain crops of every description. The Hundred of Dengie is a tenacious clay subsoil, difficult of cultivation, but in dry seasons wheat is a heavy crop, far exceeding that of any other district. Rochford Hundred possesses some of the finest land in the kingdom, being part of it unrivalled for productiveness. About Colchester and Tendring Hundred are fine turnip and corn lands. In the district of Braintree the soil is chalky clay, producing excellent wheat and barley. About the Hedinghams is a rich vale, partly devoted to the culture of the hop, which old surveys inform us was formerly grown about Chelmsford. The lower part of the Romford district, towards Brentwood, is rather inferior. Around Epping and Loughton there is a great deal of pasture; and towards the Thames is a rich tract of marsh land. The upper part of the county is principally devoted to market gardens, from which immense quantities of vegetables are sent into London. The axe of the woodman and the spade of the drainer have been busy for the last half century clearing its forest lands, of which 1,873 acres have recently been enclosed; and the extent to which agricultural drainage has been carried has greatly improved the healthfulness of the county and increased its produce. The coast is in many parts broken into a series of islets and peninsulas, cut in deeply by arms of the sea; and the oyster beds about Colchester, Mersea Island, Burnham, and other parts, render the shore and its waters as profitable as its most fertile tracts of land.



It has been said that the county is so overloaded with veal and wheat that it has no room for those objects that arrest the footsteps and employ the curiosity of those learned in the things of old. Barbarism, it is true, has sent the plough over many a spot hallowed by time and the associations connected with it; but it has still left many of the landmarks of former ages. Suckling, speaking of Essex, thus vindicates its character upon this point—"Few districts offer subjects of higher interest, and although I must admit the want of the beauties of a stately Cathedral, yet its remains of Roman constructions, its castellated and romantic ruins, its ecclesiastical and domestic structures, present in singularity of design and construction unparalleled examples of ancient art. The Roman works at Chesterford considered by some as the most entire in England,—the Castles of Colchester and Hedingham,—the Abbey of Waltham and the Priory of St. Botolph, both exceedingly curious specimens,—the Round Church of Maplestead, and above all the wooden Church of Greenstead, perhaps a genuine instance of Anglo-Saxon architecture,—the houses of Layer Marney and Audley End,—these and various others that might be justly adduced will, I think, bear me out in asserting that the county of Essex is not to be surpassed in the possession of those curious and interesting remains which constitute the riches of architectural antiquities."

Having thus glanced at the county in its present state, as compared with its aspect at the time of earliest record, when, it may almost be said "wild in the woods the noble savage ran," it may be necessary to go a step further back, and enquire whence came the people who had thus pitched their huts in the Essex woods, as elsewhere in the island, and appeared to possess the land as by right? The early epochs of most nations are lost in obscurity or clothed in fable. The poets were the first historians, and with the dim traditions of the people, they interwove the exaggerated and trustless legends of their craft. This nation, too, has its fabulous period. One story would persuade us that Brutus (whence the name of Briton), the grandson of Æneas, came here about 120 years after the destruction of Troy, and peopled the island; so that some of us may be descendants of the grim warriors whose exploits have been recorded in the deathless verse of Homer. Another tells us that thirty daughters of a King of Syria, led by one named Albina (giving the title of Albion) murdered their husbands on their wedding night, and escaping, floated in a vessel without sails or oars to these coasts, where they became acquainted with a peculiar class of spirits and bore a race of giants. It

is vain to enquire whether there be a spice of truth in these remnants of old romance. Trustworthy writers all assert that the ancient Britons were a tribe of the Gauls or Celts, who came over from the continent; and it is evident that the part on this side of the Thames was one of their earliest settlements, the inhabitants here being called Trinobantes or Trinovantes, which etymologists have traced to mean "the country beyond the stream." That this tribe was populous and of some importance is shown by the fact that its chief or king, Cassibellanus, was selected as the commander of the united British forces assembled to resist the invasion of Julius Cæsar. Prior to that event the people were free and independent. They were divided into principalities and states, and had a monarchical government, but enjoyed a large share of liberty. Indeed that stubborn character of independence which has manifested itself through ages appears to be indigenous to the soil, for we are told of these first inhabitants,—“They were at times fond of liberty almost to a degree of madness, and were then so tenacious of it as to yield up their lives a voluntary sacrifice rather than submit to what had to them only the appearance of slavery, which they so abhorred and detested.” The poet has made Caractacus thus address the captives taken in the attack on Mona, and probably it expresses the British feeling even in those rude days—

“Hear me, Romans, hear,  
That you are captives is the chance of war;  
Yet captives as ye are, in Britain’s eye  
Ye are not slaves. Barbarians tho’ ye call us,  
We know the native rights man claims from man,  
And therefore never shall we gall your necks  
With chains, or drag you at our scythed cars  
In arrogance of triumph. Nor till taught  
By Rome (what Britain sure should scorn to learn)  
Her avarice, will we barter you for gold.”

In times of peace the civil government was administered by the Druids, who, being also priests, by the influence of their religion exercised enormous power; for no species of superstition, we are told, was ever more terrible. In Essex there are no monuments left to mark the spots where the tribes mustered, and the Druid, with his flowing vestments and hoary beard, performed his mysterious rites. In some other districts—at Stonehenge for instance—these are to be found; but the huge blocks of stone of which they consist were not obtainable in this part of the kingdom. Not a vestige therefore remains. But there is no doubt that in many a spot now familiar to us. Druidical altars have been raised, within the dark groves usually chosen for their sites, and that the earth about them has been wet with the life blood of the victim of human sacrifice.

## CHAPTER II.

INVASION OF THE ROMANS AND CONQUEST OF ESSEX—SITE OF CAMULODUNUM—SETTLEMENT OF THE ROMANS THERE—ROMAN ROADS AND STATIONS IN THE COUNTY—REVOLT OF BOADICEA, MASSACRE AT CAMULODUNUM AND BATTLE AT EPPING.

It would seem that the Celts, as the original settlers, enjoyed the land in peace for some centuries. But there was an invasion prior to that of the Romans. The Belgæ, a tribe of the Teutonic race, came here about 850, B.C. with hostile views and intentions of conquest. They occupied a part of the Eastern district—by some they are supposed to have laid the original foundation of Colchester. From that time quarrels and contests followed; battles were frequent; as a natural consequence the warlike arts were cultivated, and a martial spirit prevailed; so that when Cæsar landed here in 55 B.C. with an army from Gaul, for the purpose of adding this island to the Roman empire, he found a people unwilling to submit to his yoke, and able to make a formidable stand even against the Imperial arms. They had a Senate and Council; factions and parties, the effect even then as now, of liberty, prevailed in their communities and villages; commerce began to develope itself, and foreign merchants had establishments on some parts of the coast, the Phœnicians, it is known, having from a very early age traded with this country for tin; and thus advanced, the Britons were not disposed to submit to the yoke of a new master. Their internal feuds were therefore hushed; a general-in-chief of the armies was appointed, Cassibellanus, the king of the Trinobantes, which included the Essex men, being selected for that office; and when the Romans appeared off the coast in the autumn of 55 they found the cliffs covered with armed natives ready to dispute their landing. The invaders it is known made good their footing, but on the whole could boast of little success in the first attempt. Their second expedition in the following year appears to have been more effective. Cassibellanus who must have commanded a numerous army, as it is stated he had 4,000 of their scythed chariots in the field, was defeated; and afterwards we find the natives agreeing to a tribute to the conqueror. At this time Essex had been divested of part of its wild character. The natives, instead of shifting their habitations as danger

threatened, or finer pastures for their cattle tempted them to removal, had begun to settle down, to cultivate the land, and to build strongholds. Cæsar describes this part of the country as containing "an infinite number of people, with houses very thick, and built after the manner of the Gauls." There is good reason to conclude that the place which afterwards became the Camulodunum of the Romans was at that period of some importance, and the seat of government. The site of that celebrated station has been a point of dispute between historians, Colchester and Maldon contending for this hoary honour of old antiquity. Camden gives it very decidedly in favour of the latter, but this must be taken rather as an individual opinion than as a verdict given on the examination of trustworthy evidence. Authority and circumstances decide the antiquarian suit in favour of Colchester. The word Camulodunum has been interpreted to mean "The town on a hill, at the winding of a river," and this would apply to either place; but at Maldon the pick-axe has brought to light only a few coins to confirm the title, or to show that it was at this time a Roman station at all, remarkable as it is in after history; while at Colchester the earth teems with traces of its once imperial masters, and remnants which prove it to have been a seat of their power. Morant speaking of Colchester says—"As to Roman coins and medals, immense numbers, nay bushels, have been found in and about this town; and amongst them many gold coins of the higher empire; even the richest cabinets in this nation have been furnished from hence." Cromwell adds—"Not only have fragments of the *Supellex Romana*, or Roman household utensils, of all kinds, been found whenever the earth has been disturbed within or near the circuit of the walls, but remains of that nation which comparatively occur but seldom, namely, of their buildings, are to be seen incorporated with, or rather forming the chief materials of, all the more ancient public edifices. The walls themselves, the castle, and the churches, are in great part reared with bricks and tiles of Roman manufacture. Nay, as though the Roman genius continued to reign in this place long after the extinction of their power, the pure forms of their architecture were preserved, in some instances, in the erection of the monastic edifices of Anglo-Norman times—a circumstance not a little remarkable, and as we believe not to be noticed elsewhere in buildings of a similar kind." Again, and this we take as decisive of the point—the old itineraries which have come down from the time of the Romans, describe Camulodunum as 52 miles from Londinium, the exact distance of Colchester, while Maldon is but 38.

Colchester then, it may be taken for granted, was a station of the ancient Britons. Its finely wooded hills, descending to the water, pointed it out as a desirable position, and in time its collection of huts grew into what was called a town—then into a forest camp or fortress, which afforded refuge and protection in war; those fortifications, consisting of a deep ditch with earthen ramparts, and strong lines of sharpened stakes, which even the practised Roman soldiers found rather formidable barriers to their attacks. On this foundation rose the Roman Camulodunum, and the modern Colchester, its streets extending and its busy life treading over a space which history has made almost hallowed ground.

It does not appear that the Romans, in their two first excursions, penetrated into Essex. It has been stated that Cæsar crossed the Thames and placed Mandubrace, who had fled from Cassibellanus, upon the throne of the Trinobantes; but this is questionable. Old Geoffry of Monmouth asserts that Mandubrace accompanied Cæsar to Rome. Be this as it may, the influence of the Roman arms was felt here. The land submitted to tribute, which at times was not very punctually paid; but, with the exception of this, the country remained in a manner independent, and under their own kings for nearly a century. During this time the people imitated and adopted some of the arts and luxuries and civilization of Rome. Cromwell, in his history of Colchester, states that the coins of Cunobeline, which have been found in great numbers in that locality, were executed by Roman artists; that he arrayed his soldiers in the Roman manner; that architectural embellishment began to exhibit itself in the buildings, and "all the arts of peace flourished beneath his wise protection and encouragement."

When the Romans renewed their expedition under Claudius (A.D. 43) Essex became a fierce battle-field. Plautus having defeated the Britons under Caractacus and Tojodumnus, then the kings and commanders of the Trinobantes, subsequently pursued them across the Thames, where he slew the latter. Claudius himself followed with reinforcements, encountered and defeated the Britons above the Essex marshes of the Thames, and marching to Camulodunum, took it; established there a colony, the first formed in Briton, under a Roman governor, and having disarmed the vanquished, this county lost its independence, and fell completely under the sway of the conqueror.

After a body of veteran Roman soldiers had been planted permanently at Colchester, it is often spoken of as "Colonia;"

and it became a place of importance and splendour. A temple is said to have been raised there to Claudius, so grateful were the people for the favour shown them; besides which it had a palace, a senate-house, and a theatre. It was a sort of capital which commanded the surrounding country. To rivet firmly the chains of the victor, the Romans began those works for which they were remarkable—good military roads, which had so great an effect in consolidating their power, and extending their civilization in the countries over which they ruled. The first of these appears to have passed from Colchester to Bishops Stortford, and so on to St. Albans, which soon became a settlement of some importance. The pick-axe, the spade, and the plough have in the course of 18 centuries obliterated most of the traces of this road; but some of its great bank is yet to be seen at Coggeshall, again at Rayne—so that that which is now Braintree has often resounded with the tramp of a column of Roman soldiery—and also near Dunmow; which sufficiently marks its course. Some have supposed that this was the only road the conquerors had to London. At the time of which we are speaking it probably was so. But there is good evidence of another being formed at a later period, and following very nearly the track of the present highway from London to the metropolis, there being some remnants of what appear to have been parts of its banks visible at West Ham and again near Ingatestone—this conclusion being strengthened by the fact that this road was long prior to the fixing of the boundaries of the ancient forest on that side. In Antoninus's Itinerary two of the great Roman roads are stated to have passed through the county, and the following are given as the colonies and stations:—*Camulodonum-Colonia*, Colchester; *Canonium*, Kelvedon; *Cesaromagum*, Chelmsford, or Writtle; *Durosium*, below Brentwood; *Ansem-Sturium*, Stratford; and *Londinium*, London. There was also a military way from Tilbury to Ongar, with a fortilage at Great Burstead, to protect it. Saffron Walden is stated by Dr. Gale to be seated on two military ways, passing north and east; and at Audley End are the remains of a fine camp, with the track of a road towards Chesterford, which was a place of considerable interest and note. Doubtless other towns and stations existed in various parts of the county. This is proved by the Roman remains which are occasionally turned up in unexpected places. But time has now buried the memory of them far beneath the surface.

In time the tyranny of the Romans led to a terrible effort to throw off their yoke, of which Essex was the scene. The King of the Iceni, the people who inhabited Suffolk and

Norfolk, and part of Cambridgeshire, appears to have retained his kingdom under the protection of the conquerors; and when he died he left half his territory and treasures to the Romans, under the impression that the other half would be secured for his family. The Romans, however, seized the whole. Boadicea, the widow, remonstrated. The extortioners endeavoured to silence her by insult: she was publicly scourged like a common slave, and her daughters were given over to dishonour by the soldiery. This outrage aroused all the spirit of the ancient Briton. The wretched Queen, instead of sinking under her miseries, boldly raised the standard of revolt and vengeance; and fearfully were the Romans made to pay for their breach of faith and want of honesty. Suetonius, the pro-prætor, was at this period (A.D. 61) engaged in an expedition against the sacred Isle of Mona, or Anglesey, the last home and refuge of the Druids, and this part of the country lay comparatively unprotected. There was, indeed, a garrison of Roman veterans at Colchester, but they appear to have been paralyzed as the storm of war came swelling up from Suffolk. Conscience,—for then as now such was the effect of crime,—“made cowards of them all;” and superstition gave birth to all sorts of hideous portents and omens to unman them. Tacitus, in his annals, says that the statue of the goddess of Victory at Camulodunum fell down and turned as if yielding to the enemy; howlings were heard in the theatre, and strange noises in the council-house; a fearful apparition was seen in the estuary of the Thames, towards Mersea Island, which had become a pleasant resort of the Romans; and enthusiastic women foretold the coming destruction—which, considering the force that was advancing and the panic of the defenders, required no great prophetic powers. When, therefore, the Britons, in overwhelming numbers, appeared upon the wooded hills around Colchester, and were joined by the men of Essex, who flocked in thousands to the standard of the Queen, they met with only a feeble resistance. The ninth legion, which had hastened to the rescue, was defeated, and the whole of its infantry slain; and the exasperated Britons swept into the capital of the colony, slaughtering all, even the women and children, and mercilessly destroying every object of art and emblem of the Roman sway. The soldiers threw themselves into the temple of Claudius, which they defended for two days, but at length perished by fire. Excited by their success, and enriched by plunder, the victors then appear to have turned their backs upon Colchester, leaving it a scene of utter desolation. Boadicea, at the head of her troops, directed her march along



the Roman way by Coggeshall, Rayne, and Dunmow, to St. Albans, which also fell a like prey to her fury. Every station that could be reached was devastated ; and the number of the Romans and their allies who were thus slain is stated to have been 70,000. The sounds of this calamity at length reached Suetonius, who hurried back with his army. The Britons mustered in arms at least 100,000,—some historians state their force at 250,000,—far outnumbering the Romans, who had, however, on their side the advantage of experience and skill in the art of war ; and Boadicea, retiring at their approach, established herself in an intrenched camp in the Forest, where a short distance from Epping, near Copped Hall, and now known as Ambersbury Banks, the remains of her stronghold may still be traced. Here she decided on awaiting the Roman foe. Some writers have assumed that the last struggle took place at Islington ; others at Messing ; but Morant and others, whose authority is decisive, say—“The famous battle between Suetonius and Boadicea was fought somewhere between Epping and Waltham, near which a fine camp remains.” Here, then, the opposing forces were drawn up. The Britons, like the Russians at the Alma, had brought the ladies to see the fight and witness their triumph. Their wives and children were taken in wagons to the field, and ranged in a line along the rear of the battle,—to become its victims, and to swell the slaughter of those they loved. The skilful Romans had chosen ground accessible at only one point, with a forest at the back. Having provoked the enemy to the assault, here they remained till the Britons had exhausted themselves, and expended their darts in the attempt to force the narrow pass ; then assuming the form of a wedge their infantry bore down upon them like an avalanche, while their horsemen with their spears swept the field. The Britons were routed ; and hemmed in by the rows of wagons behind, the warriors, their wives, and children fell in one indiscriminate slaughter. The Romans lost only 400, but 80,000 of the Britons were left upon the forest turf, and Boadicea escaped only to die soon after of either grief or poison. Truly has it been said that “we dwell amidst the ruins of successive races, and heed them not.” How little does the quiet traveller from Epping to Waltham or Loughton think that a scene of blood like this has passed upon the very spot he is crossing. When, too, the members of the summer pic-nic party gather round the gipsy feast spread upon the table of turf and within the shade of the brushwood and clumps of hornbeams with which the site of the camp is now overgrown, how little do

they reflect that the bones of 80,000 lie beneath the surface, and with them are buried the wreck and remnants of the rule of that people who first possessed power in the land,—for this was the last expiring effort of the Britons, and though partial revolts took place, we do not find that they again, as a people, raised the arm against the Roman in battle.

### CHAPTER III.

PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION AND RESTORATION OF CAMULODUNUM—PROBABLE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY—THE LEGEND OF KING COEL AND HELENA, AND BIRTH OF CONSTANTINE AT COLCHESTER—FINAL DEPARTURE OF THE ROMANS.

FROM this time Essex, like the other provinces, went on peacefully, the people assimilating themselves to their conquerors, and advancing in the arts and civilization they brought with them. Roman tastes and magnificence, and there is little doubt Roman licentiousness and vices, were freely indulged in. Tacitus records that under Julius Agricola the Britons began to build temples, and forums, and elegant houses; Roman fashions and dresses were adopted, the toga, or gown, being generally worn in his time. Porticos, baths, and banquet halls, the scenes of the debauchery of that period, were provided. All this was promoted and encouraged by the rulers, Britain having now become an integral part of the empire, as the people were thus enabled to gild their chains and soften down the subjection into which they had fallen. Roman laws prevailed; the magistrate superseded the authority of the Druidical priest. The Roman language was adopted, and letters and science began to make way in the island. Camulodunum was soon cleared of its blood-stained and blackened ruins, and was rebuilt with greater taste and magnificence than it presented before its destruction. The town wall, too, is believed to have been first raised at this period, to protect the place from a repetition of so terrible a surprise. Its shape, a regular oblong, with the exception of curves at the termination of their right lines instead of angles, enclosing rather over 118 acres, proclaims it of Roman origin; and though the remnants of it bear traces of its having been repaired and rebuilt by the Saxon, the Norman, and subsequent occupants, the hand which laid the

foundation was undoubtedly Roman. Entrenchments, too, as outworks of defence, were extended ; and for many years after, during the most flourishing period of the Roman sway, Colchester, whose history was at this epoch the history of the county, remained a place of considerable importance. The peaceful state of the colony for the two or three succeeding centuries, is attested by the meagre record of it at that time. It is the battle-field, the rude change which wrenches society out of its usual sockets, the turmoil leaving a long trail of misery behind it, in which the historian is most disposed to seek for his materials. He seldom dips his pen into the calm and quiet current of still life. When, therefore, we find little more than a brief passing notice of Essex, it is fair to assume that while the Romans were laying their tessellated pavements, and extending their villas thick over the county, the Britons were advancing in comfort and wealth, building towns, and bringing fresh tracts of the forest into fertile cultivation.

There is no doubt of the ~~fact~~—though we have no authentic record of it—that the seeds of Christianity, in all their purity and freshness, were sown here at that early period. Vague tradition asserts that St. Paul himself visited the island ; but probabilities and the facts in the authentic life of the Apostle, are against this supposition. Some of the members of the family of Caractacus are mentioned as having returned from Rome converted to the Christian faith. It is known, too, that the new doctrine had reached some of the soldiers of the Roman army, and as one of their principal stations was Colchester, we can imagine the soldier-preacher, with the zeal of the convert, doing the missionary work in Essex, communicating the softening and holy influences of the Gospel to the natives whom his sword had subdued. It is reasonable, too, to assume that at this time, when the sound of the imperative words—"Go ye preach the Gospel to all nations," had scarcely died away, some of the early lights and founders of the Christian Church would turn their attention to this part of the Roman empire. The author of remarks on the Monkish history says—"Almost all agree that Joseph of Arimathea and Aristobulus, mentioned by St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans, were in Britain, and built the first Christian Church in Glastonbury." It is true, he adds, the story is a plain fiction, because "it was so much the interest of the monks of Glaston to have it credited, that they have recorded it with many miracles, especially that of the holy thorn, which blossoms every 25th of December, and is the remains of Joseph's staff, as I myself was gravely informed upon the spot." But it is not fair to assume that the fact is to

be rejected, because it has been overlaid by fable. It is evident that the tree of truth had taken root in the land, and some of the men of Essex had sought shelter beneath its branches. Lucius, who held some authority here under the Romans, acquired the title of Leavermain, or "The great light," from having promoted the spread of the Gospel in his jurisdiction. There were, however, no regular teachers of the faith, and in 167, desiring instruction for himself and his people in its tenets, he sent messengers to Eleutherius, bishop of Rome. This appeal brought over missionaries and masters of the doctrines, by whom Lucius and others were baptized; and it is even believed that an Archiepiscopal see of London, with rule over this county, was established at that period. That Christianity afterwards made rapid progress under the Roman sway is attested by the fact that 27 sees were established in cities in Britain; and in 314 we find Adolphus, Bishop of Colan (or Colchester,) attending a Council at Arles. The names of many Britons are amongst the martyrs in the persecution of Diocletian; and in the Councilium to consider the deposition of Vortigern, the clergy were admitted as a body to vote.

The story of Helena and the birth of Constantine—the first Christian Emperor in the world, is so intimately connected with this subject, so interesting to the Christian mind, that we must anticipate a little, and introduce it here. It would be heresy in Colchester to doubt this legend. It has been moulded into an article of the household faith of the inhabitants. It is emblazoned in their arms, and is to be traced even in the form of their principal street. It has been doubted, nevertheless; it has even been irreverently asserted, that Helena was the daughter of an inn-keeper in Nicomedia, and that Constantine was born in Dicea. We are rather, however, disposed to trust unvarying tradition than to the words of the doubting Gibbon, or any writer who would rob us of the proud belief that Constantine was an Essex man, and that the foot of Helena has trod the streets of Colchester. The story is that Coel the 2nd, the governor of this district, revolted against the Romans; seized Essex and the adjacent counties, and declared himself independent. Constantinus was sent against him and laid siege to Colchester; but having caught a sight of Helena, the daughter of Coel, the most beautiful British woman of her time, skilled in music and adorned with every other female accomplishment, he became enamoured of her,

"He could not stay the siege of loving terms  
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes."

He therefore made peace with Coel, and entered into a treaty of

love with the daughter. Constantine, the future Emperor, was born before the solemnization of the nuptials, but was adopted by Constantinus immediately after the marriage. The Colchester Chronicle, written at the back of the Oath Book of the town, apparently in the time of Edward the 3rd, thus records these events:—

"242 A.D. Helena, daughter of Coel, born at Colchester.

"260. Constantinus, the Roman General in Spain, sails to Britain, and besieges Colchester (which continued to be held by Coel against the Romans.)

"264. The siege is raised, Constantinus betrothing Helena.

"265. Constantine (afterwards Emperor and surnamed the Great) son of Constantinus by Helena, born before the solemnization of the nuptials."

Helena was divorced; and having become a christian undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where the legend says she discovered the cross of Christ, and hence the appearance of the cross in the arms of Colchester. She is said to have founded in the town the church which bears her name. Certain it is that under Constantine christianity was widely extended in Britain. Sees were established in 27 towns; and in 314 we find Adolphus Bishop of Colon (or Colchester) attending a Council at Arles. There are records of many Britons who suffered martyrdom in the persecution of Diocletian; and in 465, at a Council held to consider the deposition of Vortigern, it is stated "the Clergy gave their votes in this council." Thus christianity had been widely adopted and a regular ministry established at this time, in Essex, perhaps, from the events related, more generally than elsewhere; but its voice was hushed, its altars thrown down, and its light extinguished by the flood of barbaric paganism that soon after broke in and overwhelmed the land.

The time had now come for another vast change in Britain—indeed in the world. Rome "which had diffused slavery and oppression, together with peace and civility, over so considerable a part of the globe," began to totter. Strange as it may appear, the Italians in the pride of military conquest had become an enervated race; and they had so often submitted to the tyranny of the demagogue and the despot, that patriotism was almost extinguished. The barbarians came at this time (about 430) bursting through their frontiers and menacing their capital. The well-trained legions were recalled from Britain to the defence; the conquerors who had held this land for nearly four centuries relaxed their hold; and having strengthened the defences for them, they gave the natives some good advice and their independence. They found it, says the historian, "a fatal gift." The old martial spirit of the Britons was gone. Polished in manners by the arts and luxuries of

their rulers, and enervated by the habit of looking to others for protection, they were unable to resist the Picts and Scots, who, finding the Roman had turned his back, came down upon them plundering and devastating the country. Twice the Romans sent a legion and saved them. A third petition for help, headed "The Groans of the Britons," was unregarded, and they were left entirely to their own resources. The monkish writers attribute their cowardice, which is in such contrast to their forefathers, to their luxury and dissoluteness; but much of their feebleness is to be traced to their improvident councils and internal quarrels. A writer says, in words that are well worthy of being pondered over by individuals as well as communities—"It being their natural temper to be always upon extremities, and not to keep to that due moderation which is the foundation of all happiness, as well as virtue, they soon broke into furious factions." The flower of the British youth, too, had been drafted off to defend the heart of the Roman empire in its extremity, or to support the cause of aspirants to the Imperial purple. Thus the land became an easy prey. It is not distinctly shown that the Picts and Scots penetrated into this district. Their foot-prints are not to be traced here. But as their chief object was plunder, a county which had been an important seat of power, and was probably wealthy and productive, was not likely to escape their ravages. Pestilence also added its horrors to predatory war; and so fearful was the visitation that scarcely sufficient were left to inter the victims. Thus smitten by an invisible hand, and slaughtered without mercy by a ferocious foe, who did not relax in his inroads till famine had forestalled the hand of plunder, the Britons had cause to yearn after the comfortable flesh-pots of the bondage from which they had just been freed. These circumstances belong rather to the history of England than of Essex; but they are necessary to an understanding of the state in which the county was left when those who had so long held sway in it, abandoned their pleasant villas and military stations, called in their troops and marched towards the coast. The Roman period forms the substructure of our civilization. It lies beneath the rubbish of successive tyrannies; and though it has left no perceptible influence upon the feeling, manners, or laws of the country, we look upon its memorials as they are dug up with a sort of geological reverence. Little did the departing Roman, as he looked back from the cliff on the island of his long sojourn, imagine that it would one day become an empire exceeding his own in extent of sway and rivalling it in luxury and enlightenment.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE SAXONS CALLED IN—THEIR CRUELITIES AND USURPATION—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HEPTARCHY—THE KINGS OF ESSEX—LAWS OF THE SAXONS—SLAVERY IN ESSEX—INCURSIONS OF THE DANES INTO THE COUNTY—THEIR ESTABLISHMENT AT SOUTH BEMFLEET, MALDON, AND DANBURY—CESSION OF ESSEX TO A DANISH CHIEF.



HOUGH severed by cruel dissensions, and disturbed by the quarrels of the clergy, who were engaged in the fierce disputes respecting the heresy of Pelagius, a native of this country, which then disturbed most parts of christendom, the Britons made an effort to resist their enemies, but it was a mistaken and fatal one. They elected Vortigern king or commander of their united forces. He was a man incapable and timorous, and "stained with every vice." Destitute of the great principle of self-reliance, he called in the Saxons—that rough human material which forms the basis of our greatness as a nation. That people brought with them the germs of most of our existing institutions; and they have absorbed and assimilated to themselves all who came, whether as conquerors, friends, or refugees seeking shelter from the perils that menaced them in other lands. Hume asserts that of all the barbarous nations known either in ancient or modern times, these "seem to have been the most distinguished both by their manners and their political institutions, and to have carried to the highest pitch the virtues of valour and love of liberty." They were, however, barbarians of the fiercest character, ever ready to unsheath the sword for plunder. Hosts of them answered the call of the Britons. They speedily cleared the land of the Picts and Scots, but kept it for themselves. The Britons soon found they had called in not only masters but executioners. They were slaughtered without mercy. The beautiful monuments of art which the Romans had left were despised by the new comers, who directed their rage especially against them, and the temples, forums, theatres, and other public buildings, amongst them those of Colchester, were left heaps of ruins. The dawning light of christianity, too, was quenched. The bishops were massacred, the priests slain at the altars; and the worship of the sun and moon, and the adoration of the god of thunder under the name of Thor,



succeeded to the doctrine of the Saviour. Indeed, the Britons may be said to have been extirpated. Three hundred of their nobility were murdered at a feast at Stonehenge, to which they had been decoyed by Hengist, the Saxon leader; some fled to the wilds and woods, and the few who remained were held in a state of abject slavery.

As the Saxons secured possession of the country they established kingdoms, each body of adventurers claiming that which it conquered. The number of kingdoms thus formed was seven, constituting what is called the heptarchy. The kingdom of East Saxony, or Essex, was established about 527, by Erchenwin, who seems to have been a governor of it under the king of Kent, of whose dominions it had formed a part. London was selected as the capital of the new kingdom; and thus Colchester was deprived of much of the importance it had for nearly five centuries retained. Erchenwin reigned 60 years. The history of Essex in the times of those who succeeded him, is exceedingly barren and uninteresting. Indeed this applies to most of the kingdoms of the heptarchy. Milton asserts that their history is no more deserving of record than the skirmishes of kites or crows; and Rapin observes that of all the heptarchy he found none so imperfect as that of Essex. We have, therefore, at this period, little more than a catalogue of the kings of Essex. The next of these was Sleda; he was succeeded by Sæbyrht, and in his time the rude barbarians in turn began to bow to the light and civilization of the christianity which they had crushed. Augustine, who had landed in Kent, and made much progress, sent Mellitus as a missionary into Essex. This king first built the church and abbey of Thorney, or Westminster; brought the county into the diocese of London; and was famed "until his death for piety and zeal for the interests of religion." Saxred, Siward, and Sigebert, who then came to the throne, jointly, fell back into paganism, and banished christianity from the kingdom. They were slain, however, and a whole Essex army destroyed, in an unequal contest with the kings of Wessex. Sigebert the Little came next, and passed away leaving nothing but his name. He was followed by Sigebert the Good, who restored the religion of Christ in his realm, and procured from his relative, the king of Northumberland, two priests to teach its tenets to the people. These men laboured successfully in the county under kingly patronage. Large congregations were gathered together; and Cedd, having become bishop of the East Saxons, or Essex, churches were built, priests were ordained, and christianity was restored and extended in the county, from

which its healing and holy light was never after withdrawn. Sigebert fell by the hand of assassins for having supported the bishop against some relatives who had been excommunicated. The other kings of Essex were Swithelm, Sibbi, and Sighere; Sigehard and Senfred; Offa; Selred; and Swithred. Their history is a blank. All we know is that Sibbi and Offa resigned their crowns and turned monks. It might almost be suspected from the circumstances that the latter was beguiled by the skilful tact which belonged to womankind in the olden time as now.

“What is it woman cannot do?”

She'll make a statesman quite forget his cunning.”

Offa had been smitten by the charms of Ciniswintha a princess of Mercia. He breathed his love into her ear in pure old Saxon, but it seems to have moved her not; she had no ambition to become queen of Essex. Now it was rather a serious matter for a maiden to refuse a king in those days. If the royal lover failed to kindle a flame in the lady's heart he usually did so in her father's castle, slaughtering besides a few hundred of her kinsmen as proofs of the strength of his attachment. Ciniswintha therefore replied to his proposal of marriage by persuasions to turn monk. She succeeded. Offa proceeded to Rome; and any danger that might have lurked in the refusal was effectually extinguished under the cowl.

Essex remained a separate kingdom for nearly three centuries. Meagre and dull as its annals of that period are, and though we are told “it made no great figure in the heptarchy,” there was then being silently laid the foundations of those municipal, political, and judicial institutions, and system of self-government, which are seen in their full and reformed maturity at the present day. The king received from every man a proportion of cattle and corn, from which arose national taxation and feudal tenures. Persons were appointed to administer justice in the towns and villages, as our corporations and local magistrates do now. Public assemblies were held on certain days for the trial of offenders as at an assize, at which “infamous persons and sluggards suffered death by drowning”—so that the idle drones received no quarter, and “You have woke me too soon, I must slumber again,” was a dangerous avowal a thousand years ago.

The nobility of the kingdom and the thanes, or freemen—for slavery then flourished upon the Essex soil—met to confer on affairs of importance, from which practice, universally adopted, our present parliament, extended by repeated contests and strengthened by popular struggles, has grown up. The

boundaries, too, and even the existing names of many of our parishes were then introduced. Liberty, however, did not in that age extend to the lower stratum of society. The Essex labourers and the domestic servants of the household were slaves. Under the name of villeins, the mass now called the humbler classes, the Essex labourers were the property of the feudal lords, bound to the soil they cultivated, unable to offer the strength of their arms, or to carry the cunning of their hands, however skilled in any particular craft, to a new home and the highest bidder. Still even this species of bondage carried with it some advantages—it insured the villein against want. The lord was bound to support him; and in sickness and decaying age he had not to go humbly crouching for parish dole, or seek his way to a pauper's grave through the portals of a union-house—a miserable advantage, indeed, which is more than compensated by the sense of freedom which now sheds its holy light around the humblest hearth. Servitude of this kind continued till the time of Elizabeth, and even after it. Some villeins held land on certain conditions, and to render services, at the will of the lord. When the service was base and uncertain in its nature it was called pure villeinage; if certain and defined it was called in the phrase of the day villein-socage. Hence arose the system of copyholds, which in a modified form encumbers the land to the present day, though legislative measures are tending to its equitable extinction.

The houses were of the humblest character; the churches were mostly of wood. The following extract from an old historian will give some idea of the mansions of the great men of that day, and the position of the lords of the Essex soil and their dependants:—"The Saxon thane built his hall from the wood of his demesne by the labor of his bondmen; it was thatched with reeds or straw, or roofed with wooden shingles; in plan it was little more than the word 'hall' implied, a capacious apartment, which in the day time was adapted to the patriarchal simplicity of the owner, and formed at night a stable for his servants, to whose accommodation their master's was not much superior in a small adjoining chamber. The fire was kindled in the centre of the hall, and the smoke made its way out through the opening in the roof. The lord and his hearthmen, by which name his more confidential companions were known, sat by the same fire, at which their repast was cooked, and at night retired to share the same dormitory, which served also as a council chamber."

When Egbert in 827 broke up the Heptarchy, and extended his rule over nearly the whole island, Essex lost its kingly character, and was merged into the general monarchy. The county was not, however, destined to enjoy a long rest. Quiet had begun to reign in its homes. Justice was regularly administered. Tracts of forest were disappearing; and villages were rising up in many a rural vale. The Saxon savage had been tamed, and appreciated that civilization which he had at first trodden down. This people had become the quiet and christian possessors of the land. But another inroad and revolution was at hand. The Danes, those "sea kings of the north, whom Europe beheld with horror," had for some years been hovering around, and now swooped down upon the coasts, ravaging the towns within reach, and carrying many of the inhabitants into captivity. Emboldened by success they ascended from plunder to notions of permanent conquest. The coast of Essex lay particularly exposed to the inroads of these pirates and plunderers; but although their first foray was made in the country in 787 they do not appear, according to some authorities, to have turned their attention and their weapons towards this county till 870, nearly a century afterwards; but it is recorded that in 830 they swept along its borders in a plundering excursion through East Anglia, and carried off spoil from Colchester, which they paused to pillage on their way. Thenceforth the harassing and devastating incursions of the Danes were almost incessant. In the reign of Ethelwolf the people, as a religious offering to avert these terrible invasions, universally admitted the right of the clergy to tithes; and "so meritorious was this concession deemed by the English that trusting entirely to supernatural assistance they neglected the ordinary means of safety."

Under the successors of Ethelwolf, Ethelbert and Ethelred, fierce battles with the Danes took place in various parts of the kingdom. The last named sovereign fought nine in one year; but still the invaders gradually gained ground. In 870 they over-ran East Anglia, and slew Edmund, described as the tributary king of that district, whose name, since canonized by the Romish church, distinguishes the capital of Suffolk. Gloated with pillage and murder, they then broke into Essex, and, pleased with its fertility and the taste of the rich plunder it afforded, they seized upon some of its best towns and most productive districts, and began to found homes and secure military stations. Thenceforth this county became one of their chief haunts and constant battle fields. South Bemfleet, lying adjacent to Canvey Island, in Hadleigh Bay, about four miles

above the now fishing town of Leigh, which had before formed a frequent landing place, was seized and fortified. A castle was erected there and garrisoned; and to this point the treasure of the Essex towns and the captives taken from the hearths of the surrounding districts were carried for security, till either ransomed or otherwise disposed of. The now quiet hamlets and homesteads of Rochford Hundred were often alarmed by the tramp of bands of these merciless marauders, who, passing with their narrow war vessels up the Crouch and the Blackwater, also made themselves masters of Dengie Hundred. The print of their footsteps is still to be found there in the remains of military works, and in the name, which is derived from "Danes-ig"—that is, "the Danes' Island"—superseding the title of Witbricteshern, which the Saxons had given to the district. Maldon, certainly one of the most ancient towns of the county, and probably a place of importance at this early period, was no doubt the spot at which they fixed their chief station, as a point well adapted for military defence, and for the maintenance of the mastery they assumed over the Hundred. Danbury, too, as its name implies—Dane-burgh, a camp or town of the Danes—was one of their most important posts ere they had secured a firm footing in the kingdom. The church stands in the centre of a perfect fortification ascribed to that people; and it must have been a formidable stronghold. The lines of this ancient encampment, which may still be traced, enclose an area of 680 yards, on an elevation of 700 feet, and with a glacis on the north side 80 feet deep. There appears little doubt Danbury hill had been a place of military consequence before this occupation of the Danes. It was just such a point as the sagacious Romans would seize upon for a station, commanding, as it does, the eastern coast, and the country westward even up to London. Proofs that it was thus occupied are found in the church, parts of which are built with a mixture of stone and Roman brick. "Viewing the country from this elevated height," says Suckling, "reflections of unusual interest naturally arise in the mind. In the earliest periods to which authenticated history recalls our attention, our Roman masters secured this spot as a stronghold against the covert attacks of the barbarous or fearless natives. Upon the departure of these politic conquerors, a more bloody and vindictive race here displayed their banner, and hence made those irruptions upon a now debased people, which could alone be averted by mean submission or by the payment of an ill-spared tribute. Subsequently, under the

Normans, their no less despotic, though more polished, masters, this place still held out attractions of such a nature as to induce those chieftains to whom Danbury was apportioned to erect here their baronial and fortified habitations. In a still later period, and singular that period should so little precede our own, the natural beauties of the spot induced the proprietors here also to erect their modern and more commodious mansions. And while the church, the school of christian meekness, occupies the site of the pagan temple, the comfortable, though defenceless manor house, smiles on the passing traveller where once frowned the turretted castle of the feudal lord." Many of the oaks in the park are believed to have stood in the stern era of the Norman rule.

Other spots in the county were occupied by the Danes, and some of them they continued permanently to possess. Indeed, the whole coast was open to the invasions of these half-pirate, half-warrior bands, as their fleets with fresh hordes appeared upon the surrounding waters. In these days, when the cattle can be left unguarded in the field, and the Dengie and Rochford Hundred farmers can gather in their rich harvest unmolested, we can form but a faint idea of the terror and the misery which these waves of savage barbarians, who looked upon spoliation as a virtue, caused to the inhabitants when sweeping suddenly over the land, leaving desolation behind them. Hume says—"All orders of men were involved in this calamity; and the priests and monks, who had been commonly spared in the domestic quarrels of the heptarchy, were the chief objects on which the Danish idolaters exercised their rage and animosity. Every season of the year was dangerous, and the absence of the enemy was no reason why any man should esteem himself a moment in safety." Essex, much as it has been torn and distressed by revolution and civil conflict, was never reduced to such a state of wretchedness as at this period.

In the course of nine years from the murder of St. Edmund, the Danes had completely subjugated the whole of East Anglia; and Alfred the sage as well as the soldier, who then reigned, seeing that the sword failed, resolved to try the power of diplomacy. He entered into negotiation with Godrun, who by the treaty which followed agreed to embrace christianity, and upon the stipulation that the Danes who were in the country were to settle down peaceably, he became King of East Anglia, with rule over Essex from the Thames to the river Lea.

## CHAPTER V.

CONTINUED CONTESTS WITH THE DANES—CAPTURE OF SOUTH BEMFLEET CASTLE—SOUTH SHOEbury—LOST CITIES OF ESSEX—LAWS OF ALFRED—BUILDING OF WITHAM—THE DANES AT COLCHESTER—DEFEAT OF BRYTHNOTH AT MALDON—MASSACRE—BATTLE OF ASH-INGDON—HOCKLEY MEMORIAL CHURCH—ST. EDMUND'S SHRINE AT GREENSTED.

ALFRED, the great law-giver, the friend of learning and the successful soldier, whose name, interwoven into many a nursery-tale, is rendered familiar to us in infancy, was at first unsuccessful in contending with the Danes. To so low an ebb did his fortune sink at one period that he was compelled to hide himself beneath a mean disguise, and seek shelter in the house of one of his own neat-herds in the marshes of Somersetshire, where, as romance tells us, he received a sound rating from the household dame for scorching her oatmeal cakes while intent on trimming his arrows and pondering on affairs of state. His Saxon subjects, however, again took heart, and, rallying around him, he renewed the war. He created a fleet, which surprised and destroyed sixteen of the enemy's vessels at "the Stures-mouth, near Harwich," though the victorious vessels were soon after cut off by a force sent out by the Danes from Suffolk and Norfolk. In 894 two fresh bands moored their ships on the Essex shore, and ravaged Kent. Alfred, having intercepted and stripped them of their booty, they fled across the Thames and up the Colne, to Mersey island, (Bocklesey, Speed calls it,) where the king's army besieged them. Their friends in East Anglia and Northumbria made a diversion in their favour, and Alfred marched from Essex to relieve Exeter. The blockade of Mersey was, however, continued. Another party, too, re-inforced by volunteers from London, attacked the fort and castle at South Bemfleet, which was taken, with the rich booty it contained; its walls razed, and the ships burnt or carried away. Hastings, the commander of the Danes, his wife and two sons, who had been taken captive, being restored to him, agreed to leave the kingdom, and he did so. His followers, however, had formed a partiality for Essex. Instead of departing with their lord, they seized upon South Shoebury, now a small village of 104 souls, jutting out to a point at the mouth of the Thames. It was once a city of great extent; but its walls, and



streets, and fortifications, and temples, were long ago levelled by the ocean, and now lie buried beneath the Maplin sands, on whose treacherous waste the ship is often stranded, and the mariner perishes on the spot where once stood the halls and rose the bulwarks of the olden day. This is not the only city of Essex lost in the sea. The town of Orwell rose where the shoals of the West Rocks are now seen off Harwich. Near where Bradwell now stands rose "the flourishing city of Ithancester," built, it is supposed, upon the Othana of the Romans, and here Cedd, the first christian bishop, baptised his converts, planted his priests, and built some of the earliest churches; but time has sapped it, and the wave has buried all traces of its ancient strength and splendour.

The Danes built a castle and raised fortifications at Shoebury; and from this point they sent expeditions throughout England, even up to the Severn. These excursions were not very successful in the end. The parties were severely handled. Many of them were killed by the king's forces; others were starved to death; the remainder fled back to their castles and entrenchments in this county. From thence they soon retired part into East Anglia, and part to Mersey Island, which, however, they soon abandoned.

To guard the coast from the oft arriving hordes, who followed in the track of those who had settled here, Alfred built new fast sailing galleys with which he intercepted them before they could land. He encouraged, too, a maritime spirit in his subjects; and the ports of Essex then began to be filled with shipping. With reinforcements thus cut off, and after several defeats, followed in some cases by well-timed severity, the Danes, settled in this county—which had nominally reverted to the Saxon by the death of Godrun—and elsewhere in the kingdom, made their submission to the English monarch. Peace was thus restored to the whole realm.

Of the season of tranquillity which followed, Alfred availed himself to add the social reforms of the sage to the triumphs of the soldier. "He seems," says his admiring historian, "to have been the model of that perfect character which, under the denomination of a sage or wise man, philosophers have been fond of delineating rather as a fiction of their imagination than in hopes of seeing it really existing." Thus qualified he set about the work with wisdom, but still with the stern hand that became the times. An earnest friend of liberty, and desiring, as he nobly expressed it in his will, that the people should ever remain as free as their own thoughts, he still felt that real freedom could only coexist with strict



order ; lawlessness and loose notions in the governed being as fatal to its full enjoyment as tyranny in the government. Hence his first efforts were directed to restraining the licentiousness which war in an age of barbarism had produced, and to providing for the regular and faithful administration of justice. The first step was to divide the whole kingdom into counties, the boundaries of Essex being then fixed as they have continued to exist down to the present day. The county was next divided into hundreds—a name with which we are still familiar ; and each hundred into tithings, corresponding as far as we can judge with the present parishes, in which the inhabitants were registered. A tithing comprised ten families. Each householder was responsible for the conduct of his family and his slaves, and even for his guests, if they bided in his house three days ; nay, the tithing was answerable for the conduct of all, for if a crime was committed by one of them, and the criminal could not be produced, the other members were liable to punishment by fine for the offence. Officers were appointed to preside in these different districts, the smaller cases and petty offences being disposed of in the tithings,—the more serious matters at meetings of the hundred, and appeals and important disputes in the county court, which was held for the purpose twice a year. Further, the foundation was laid of that palladium Englishmen are so justly proud of, and which, in spite of occasional failures, gives that contented confidence which is so universally felt in the administration of justice—the trial by jury. It was enacted that “in all criminal prosecutions twelve men of the same order as the prisoner, chosen for that purpose, should determine respecting the facts,” and the judge was to give sentence according to the verdict—a system which has survived the changes and revolutions of a thousand years, and has often snatched the victim from the baffled political oppressor. Sheriffs, too, were instituted ; those first appointed for Essex also exercising authority over Hertfordshire ; and to guide and restrain the magistrates in the discharge of their duties a code of regulations was provided, which is the origin of what has long been called the common law of England. The effect of these wise reforms was soon visible. Learning was encouraged ; civilization progressed ; an orderly and disciplined, and moral population grew out of the chaotic misery which before prevailed ; thieving seems to have been unknown in the land, as it is recorded that “gold bracelets were hung up near the highways, and no man dared to touch them.”

On the death of Alfred, in 901, after a reign of nearly 30

years, he was succeeded by Edward the elder, and fresh troubles came to this county. Ethelwald, a son of Alfred's elder brother, resolved to dispute the crown with him; and landing on the Essex coast in 904, with an army of Danes and Normans, took possession of it, but was slain in the following year. The Danes again submitted, as was their wont in case of defeat; the power of the king was restored; and "about this time," says the Saxon chronicle, "he became again master of the best part of Essex, which had been many years in subjection to the Danes." To make his hold secure, the king resolved on building a fortified town at Witham, the first mention in history of this place; and while the work was in progress he came with an army and encamped at Maldon. This was in 913, and seven years after he came again to Maldon, whose ancient works and wealth had probably suffered greatly from the fierce struggles and the plundering spirit of its unwelcome guests, rebuilt and fortified, and of course garrisoned it. During this time Colchester, from its strength, had defied the Royal power,—it had become a regular Danish town; but the year after Maldon had been made secure, a force, gathered from this and the neighbouring counties, marched against it. It was taken after a siege, the place plundered, and the Danish defenders and inhabitants slaughtered, a few only escaping over the walls. To revenge the defeat the Danes collected an army from Suffolk and Norfolk, and, entering Essex, laid siege to Maldon; but the place gallantly held out, and, alarmed at the forces marching to its relief, the assailants fled, hundreds being overtaken by the avenging pursuers and slain. In November of the same year, King Edward occupied Colchester with an army of West Saxons, and having repaired and partly rebuilt the walls, so effectually curbed the turbulent spirit of the intruders that the land remained at rest for 70 years.

In 993 fresh hordes swept along the eastern coast. Ipswich was pillaged; Colchester was this time passed unassailed; and the enemy advanced upon Maldon, to which they laid siege, with a hankering, inspired by old tradition, to possess again that stronghold of their fathers. Brythnoth, the Earl of Essex, hurried to the defence of the town, and made dispositions to raise the siege, and save it from pillage. The Danes, who warred for plunder alone, were willing to obtain it without fighting, and sent a messenger to the advancing Saxon to say the Danes would retire on receiving a sum of money by way of ransom. The following was the bold response of Brythnoth to this overture:—"Hearest thou, mariner, what this people saith; they

will give you spears for tribute, the venomous edge and old swords; these weapons that serve you not in battle. Messenger of the sea forces, take an answer back—tell thy people much unpleasant news—that here stands undaunted an Earl with his army, who will defend this country, the land of Etheldred, mine elder (*i. e.* chieftan), the people and the earth. There shall fall heathens in battle. Too shameful it seemeth to me that you, with your treasures, go to the ships without being fought with, now that ye have come so far hither to our land; nor shall ye so easily obtain treasure; of us shall point, and edge grim war play—first take care, before we give ransom." The spirit of the Earl, however, was greater than his power. He was killed, his army defeated with great slaughter, and the place fell. Ethelred was forced to make peace with the victors; but the faith thus pledged was frailly kept, for in the following year they were ravaging the coasts of Essex, and committing horrible barbarities. By the advice of a churchman, Siria, Archbishop of Canterbury, the fatal expedient was resorted to of protecting the land from plunder by paying to the marauders a sum of money, raised by a tax, which in time was called Danegelt. This, as might have been anticipated, multiplied the visits of the invaders; who, finding this productive gold mine opened for them by cowardice, worked it industriously with the sword. •

The exactions, and atrocities, and bad faith of the Danes at length provoked Ethelred to a terrible retaliation—the massacre of all those who were settled in the land. Secret orders were issued, and this cruel project was executed on Sunday, the 13th of November, 1002. The victims thus given up to the wild revenge of the populace were murdered without mercy. Hoary age and lisping innocence—the warrior taken unawares, and the woman at her household work, fell in the indiscriminate slaughter. How far Essex participated in this human butchery is not told in the red record. Possibly the soil we tread was not polluted by the tide of blood. It seems certain that the massacre could not have been universal, as the Danes in some districts formed nearly the whole population. The hideous crime, however, resulted in placing the royal power in the hands of the people whose extermination had been thus savagely planned. Sweyn and large bodies of Danes, who had desired a plausible pretext for invasion, soon appeared off the coasts as avengers of their countrymen. In 1009 a large body of them wintered on the Thames, and foraged through this county for subsistence. Towns were burnt, whole districts ravaged, and En-

glish hostages were mutilated, by the cutting off their hands and noses. The war was carried on so vigorously, or rather fiercely, that two years after Essex and fourteen other counties acknowledged their sway. The struggle, like that between the ancient Britons and the Romans, was at length decided upon the Essex soil. The English, under Edmund Ironside, who had succeeded to the throne, and the Danish army, under Canute, met at "Assandune"—a place, as some assert, near Saffron Walden; but later discoveries and the abandonment of the old belief that Bartlow Hills had something to do with this battle, confirm the opinion of others that it was Ashingdon, in Rochford Hundred, where traces of the fierce struggle which converted those who had been the marauders into the masters of the kingdom, are still to be found. It is a picturesque spot. Standing upon the commanding eminence, Canewdon, where Canute pitched his camp and held his court, and looking down upon the peaceful valley through which flows the Crouch, and the well-tilled fields and rural slopes of Ashingdon and Hockley, up to Battles Bridge, we behold the battle-field of the contending races. Here the fierce warriors of Denmark encountered the Saxon strength, and shattered it; there the nobility of England rushed forward to restore the fortunes of the day, and were slaughtered in hundreds. Edric, who had so often acted the traitor's part, fled at the beginning of the day; and the Saxon force was utterly routed. This scene, now so calm and quiet, was strewn with the dead, and disturbed with the groans of the wounded; and in yonder barrows at Hull Bridge, and along the borders of the Crouch, have slumbered for nearly a thousand years many of those who took part in this fierce conflict. The church on the lofty hill at Hockley is stated to have been erected by Canute in commemoration of the victory. S. Dunelmensis says, the conqueror "erected this church *in monte quæ Assandune dicitur*;" and the very ancient character of a part of the building, in the style of that age, strengthens the belief that the sacred edifice, which the traveller along the high road from Rayleigh to Rochford sees perched upon the hill to his left, is one of the memorials and landmarks of the great events of far gone days.

About coeval with this structure, and springing out of the struggles of that time, rose another remarkable church—the shrine of St. Edmund at Greensted, a mile west of Ongar. It is literally a log-house. Its walls were formed of the forest trees, cleft in twain and set upright, the bottoms resting upon a cill, and the tops, rudely bevelled off, let into a groove at the top. The split portions of the trees placed side by side form a level

surface within, and the rough and rounded parts are turned to the sun and storm without,—the space thus enclosed being 29 feet 9 inches by 14 feet wide. Yet this primitive wall of unhewn planks has defied time and the worm for more than eight centuries. This was the shrine in which the body of St. Edmund rested in 1013 on its way to its final burial place at Bury, from which it had been hurried on an invasion of the Danes three years before. No doubt, we are assured, has ever been entertained that the rough and unpolished fabric of oak, or as some think, of chesnut, was the "wooden chapel near Aungre" referred to by Lydgate, the monk; and while gazing upon the curious and venerable edifice, the mind is carried back to the scene of the cowled band halting in the bush, no habitable resting-place within reach, and depositing the body of the sainted king beneath the shelter reared from the spoil of the surrounding forest, their torches glimmering through the brushwood, and the solemn chant of the watchers through the night breaking upon the ear. To the Saxon mind the ground became holy. The shrine was preserved till in time it grew into a parish church. Chancel and spire were added; and within the last few years modern piety has thoroughly restored the whole fabric, the original planks and their position being religiously preserved. In the days of masses and miracles it was no doubt a place of frequent resort; and even now the church is an object well worthy to tempt the foot of the antiquarian pilgrim.

## CHAPTER VI.

**RULE OF THE DANES—EDWARD THE CONFESSOR AT HAVERING—THE CONQUEST—THE NORMANS IN ESSEX—DOMESDAY BOOK—ERECTION OF CASTLES IN THE COUNTY—FEUDAL TENURES AND OPPRESSIONS OF THE NORMAN ROYALTY**

**V**ICTORY at Ashington was followed by a partition of the kingdom. The routed Saxons mustered again at Gillingham, and prepared for battle; but ere the contending forces met the English and Danish nobles, equally tired of the exhausting war, dictated a compromise to their leaders. By this arrangement Canute assumed sovereignty over the northern part of the kingdom, including Essex, and the southern was left in the possession of Edmund. The murder of the latter monarch, however, by his own chamberlains

a month after this settlement gave the Danes undivided rule over the whole realm. From this time Danbury and the other military stations began to be neglected. The Danes descended from their strongholds and settled quietly in the land. Instead of superseding the population, in time the conquerors became absorbed in it, strengthening and improving it by the infusion of fresh blood. They obeyed its laws, adopted its habits, and embraced its religion. A popular lecturer traces our naval superiority to this amalgamation. "Your pure-bred Saxon," says he, "with his blue eyes and fair hair, was like a great fat ox; he would do a wonderful deal of ploughing, but he would take a long time to do it in. These Danes infused a little mercury into the Saxon blood. They taught us English to be fond of the sea; and we are the only nation in the world that ever took naturally to the sea, and made a plaything of it."

Under the rule of the three Danish kings, Essex enjoyed a period of profound peace. The burnt dwellings were built up, cultivation was resumed, and the traces of war obliterated. The Saxon supremacy was restored in the person of Edward the Confessor (1041), and that saintly monarch was frequently resident in this county. Havering-atte-Bower, which had been a favourite seat of some former Saxon kings, possessed walks and wooded solitudes peculiarly attractive to Edward's retired habits and religious feelings, and thither he often came to escape from the troubles of political government to prayer. A curious legend is related of this sovereign in connexion with one of his sojourns here. In *Legenda Aurea* the story is given as follows:—"As the church of Clavering (Havering), in this county, was consecrating, and was to be dedicated to Christ and St. John the Evangelist, King Edward the Confessor, riding that way, alighted out of devotion to be present at the consecration. During the procession a fair old man came to the King and begged alms of him in the name of God and St. John the Evangelist. The King having nothing else to give, as his almoner was not at hand, took the ring from his finger, and gave it to the poor man. Some years after two English pilgrims, having lost their way as they were travelling to the Holy Land, saw a company clothed in white, with two lights carried before them, and behind them came a fair old man. The pilgrims joining them, the old man enquired who they were and from whence they came. After hearing their story, he brought them into a fine city, where there was a room furnished with all manner of dainties. When they had well refreshed themselves, and rested there all night, the old man set them again in the right way; and, at parting, he told

them he was John the Evangelist ; adding, as the legend goes on, ' Say ye unto Edward your kyng that I grete hym well by the token that he gaaf to me this rynge wyth his own hands at the halowying of my chirche, which rynge ye shall deliver hym agayn. And say ye to him, that he dyspose his goodes, for wythin sixe monethes he shall be in the joye of heven wyth me, where he shall have his rewarde for his chastite and for his good livinge.' At their return home the two pilgrims waited upon the king, who was then at this bower, and delivered to him their message and the ring, from which circumstance this place is said to have received the name of Havering." This whole story is wrought in basso-relievo in the chapel at Westminster, where Edward the Confessor lies buried, on the back of the skreen that divides it from the altar.

During the reign of this monarch, more celebrated for piety than for political vigour, the pirate again appeared upon our coasts. The sails of 25 Danish ships were seen in the Thames ; raids were made into this county ; farm and village were despoiled ; and numbers of all conditions in life, and of both sexes, were seized in their quiet homes and carried off into slavery. Earl Godwin, whose son Harold was governor of Essex, came to the rescue, and chasing the invaders from the shore, the terror of the sudden attack and midnight surprise thenceforth entirely ceased.

But a mighty revolution, which was to dispossess alike the great majority of the ancient possessors of the Essex soil, as well as the new Danish settlers, was at hand—that of the Norman conquest. In laws and religion it made little change, as the new comers and the old inhabitants were originally of the same northern stock, and were guided by the same broad principles of government and policy. The once fierce Saxons had been tamed down into obedient sons of the church, showing their devotion by building churches, and erecting and endowing abbeys and monasteries. The Normans had long before embraced Christianity. On these points, therefore, they were agreed ; and the churches were respected and more richly endowed,—the laws remained with little modification. But a disastrous change came over the social life of the people. The rich Thaness, or lords of the county, who in their several districts had ruled the population around them, were driven from their manor-houses and halls, and were replaced by military adventurers, many of whom had brought with them nothing but proud spirits, their swords, and empty purses. Those who might be called the middle classes of that time, who stood between the Saxon owners of the soil and the serfs,



were trodden into the condition of slaves. It has been questioned by some historians whether the accession of William the Norman could fairly be called a conquest. Edward the Confessor, to erect a barrier against the ambition of the son of his old enemy Godwin, had marked out William, who was his kinsman, as his successor, and had made proposals to him on the subject, though, with the feebleness of purpose which characterized him, he did not carry the arrangement to formal completion. The Norman looked on himself as rightful claimant of the English throne,—as the man to whom the kingdom was to be bequeathed, as is shown by his interview with Harold, and the oath to maintain his pretensions which he exacted from that noble when he accidentally fell into his power. When Edward died in 1066, Harold, indeed, the former governor of Essex, heedless of his oath, seized the sceptre and was anointed king, apparently with the acquiescence of the nation; but after his defeat and death at Hastings, William stepped quietly to the throne, and took the oath customary with the Saxon and Danish sovereigns. So far the resistance offered may be considered little more than the turmoil which usually accompanied the commencement of a fresh reign. The new king began his rule in a spirit of moderation. Soon after his arrival he took up his residence at Barking Abbey, then a place of great repute and splendour. There many of the Saxon nobles and great men of the land went and swore fealty to him, and were reinstated or confirmed in their possessions. His purpose at that time appears to have been to quietly consolidate his sway. Circumstances, however, compelled him to play the conqueror. The restless dislike in the country of a foreign king; the frequent insurrections; perhaps more than all the craving of the Norman band, who looked upon all the property of the kingdom as fair spoil; brought on a general confiscation of estates and change of owners in this county. The plunder was carried on throughout all the land. Commissions went forth to report on all those who had given their support to Harold, and pronounce the confiscation of their estates; and from the large possessions which the family of Godwin held here, and the influence it exercised over the other landowners, scarcely an Essex Saxon appears to have survived the ordeal. The proud Earlderman and the rich Thane were swept from the county; and thenceforth we read only of Counts, and Earls, and Barons, Esquires, and vassals,—terms connected with the grinding feudal system, and the glittering but iron age of chivalry.

No special record has been left of the proceedings in Essex;



but we may form some idea of the extent of the spoliation, and the feeling of almost stupor that would come over the county by imagining all the noble families and landed proprietors whose names are so familiar to us—the Westerns and Rayleighs, and Petres and Maynards, the Tyrells, the Du Canes, and the Bramstons, and all the long roll of the county Squires, turned from their own homes into the highways, exposed to the contempt of a conquering Russian soldiery, while Menschikoffs, and Orlonoffs, and others whose names sound as uncouthly to us as did those of the steel-clad Normans to the Saxon ear of old, set themselves down in their warm halls and lorded it over their ancient patrimonies. This was the character of the landed revolution effected. Suspicion of a feeling averse to William was taken as positive proof of guilt by Commissioners whose friends and relatives were waiting for the property they confiscated. “Ancient and honourable families were reduced to beggary,” says the historian before referred to; and in Domesday Book, made a few years after, we do not find in the roll of the landowners of Essex a single name that carries with it a Saxon sound. The burgesses of the towns escaped more easily. They were felt to be necessary, because the military Norman could not stoop to trade. The common people, too, “were not massacred but protected;” but then as they had nothing to lose, and were looked upon as part of the stock of the manor, necessary to cultivate the estate for the new owner, there was not much magnanimity in this sort of mercy. The Conquest did not materially alter the state of slavery in the county; the lands were transferred to Norman masters and the slaves went with them. Amongst those who shared the landed spoils of the county were the king’s brother, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, “the mitred plunderer,” as he has been called, who was presented with 39 of the Essex lordships. Eustace, the Earl of Boulogne, received amongst other possessions the manor of Bundish Hall, Radwinter; part of the lands at Ashdon, with the manor of Newnham; the greater part of the parish of Elmdon; the parish of Crishall; the lordship of Chipping Ongar; the parishes of Fyfield and Lambourn; Stanford Rivers Hall; lands in Harlow and Latton; and the manor of Great Parndon. William de Warrenne took the parishes of Little Wenden and Leaden Roothing; two manors in High and Aythorp Roothing, which the Conqueror wrested from the monastery of Ely, because it sheltered some English who would not submit to him; a manor in Little Canfield; Househam Hall, in Matching; and other large possessions. Eudo Dapifer, a son of the king’s steward,

who became a great friend and patron of the town of Colchester, had for his portion lands and houses in that borough, with 25 lordships, spreading over the parishes of Henham, Takely, Quendon, Arkesdon, Norton Mandeville, Kelvedon Hatch, Greensted Hall, near Ongar; the manor of Folly, at Great Dunmow, &c. Geoffrey de Mandeville received the lordship of Walden, and was the first who gave life to that place; lands and a manor in Henham; the manors of Fernham and Walkers, in Farnham; Newton Hall and Bigods, Great Dunmow; the lands of Little Easton; manors in High Easter; the parish of Mashbury; Rookwood Hall, in Abbess Roothing; Shelly Hall; Stock Hall, Matching; with other manors spread over various parts of the county, amounting altogether to 40 lordships. Robert Gernon had the whole of Stansted Mountfitchet, and built a castle there; to which were attached the lordships of Springfield, Margaretting, Easthorp, Birch, Wivenhoe, Leyton, East and West Ham, Chingford, Chigwell, &c.; he took the surname of Mountfitchet from his chief seat. Alberic de Vere, who founded the mighty Earldom of Oxford, received lands and manors in Radwinter, Wimbish, Ugley, and Canfield; the manor of Garnish Hall, Margaret Roothing; Down Hall, Hatfield Broad Oak; with the castle and parish of Great Canfield, besides large possessions around Hedingham, where he settled and reared his baronial castle. Ralph Baynard obtained lands about Wimbish, Henham, and Wenden Lofts; Ralph Peverel at Hatfield, Debden, Chickney, &c. Suene had the great barony of Rayleigh, where according to the custom of most of the new comers, he built a castle, and his other possessions included the half-hundred of Clavering, the lordship of Hill Hall, Theydon, and Little Hallingbury Hall. Thus grim warriors, palace favourites, some of the meanest births and lowest stations, one at least who took off the king's hands his concubine when he was tired of her, became the lords of Essex, and occupied its castles and manors. Of all the 90 owners of the soil whose names are given in Domesday Book, not one of them is that of an old proprietor, save, perhaps, that of Suene, the Dane, who having adroitly trimmed his sails and tacked about when William landed, was permitted to retain his estates, and became the first Sheriff after the Conquest. A few of the names in that ancient roll have something of a Saxon sound, but we shall find, says Morant, "if we look into the places where they are mentioned, that they had the estates of Saxons dispossessed."

Domesday Book, so often referred to, is a record of all the estates in the kingdom after they had been thus re-settled.

It was made by Commissioners, who were occupied for six years in the work, and the returns in each district were made by juries of freemen. It describes the extent of the land, the state it was then in, whether meadow, pasture, wood, or arable, the name of the proprietor, the tenure by which it was held, and the value at which it was estimated. There were the Great and Little Domesday Books, the latter of which contains the survey of Essex; and it is still taken as evidence of decisive authority when an appeal can be made to its pages. Morant gives the following as the style of record in this noble work of tyranny:—

*¶ Hund. de Beuentreu. Berchingas tenet sep. Sca. M. p. xxx. hid. Tc. iiii car. in dmo. mo. iii. q̄ iiii<sup>ta</sup> posset fieri. Tc. lxx. car. hom. mo. lxxiii. Tc. c. uill. mo. cxl. Tc. l. bor. mo. lxxxx. Tc. x. ser. mo. vi. Silu. m. porc. c. ac. pr. ii. mol. i pisc. ii runc. xxxiiii au. cl. por. cxiiii. oues. xxiiii. cap. x. uasa apu.*

In modern language the entry reads thus:—

“Becontree Hundred. St. Mary (Abbey of Barking) always holds Birchanger for 30 hides (of land). Formerly four caracutes in sovereignty, now three, but four might be made (of it). Formerly 70 capital tenants, now 68. Formerly 100 villeins, now 140. Formerly 50 bordarii, now 90.\* Formerly 10 slaves, now 6. Wood or thicket for 1000 swine, 100 acres of meadow, 2 windmills, a fish pond, 2 working horses, 84 beasts, 150 swine, 114 sheep, 24 goats, 10 hives of bees.”

To awe the people, and consolidate the power of the Norman Barons, as well as to protect their persons, which in the midst of a desolated and discontented population were only safe behind thick walls, the county was studded over with castles. Then was the old Saxon stronghold at Colchester repaired and garrisoned by a band of Norman warriors. Hadleigh, another royal castle, which now lies in venerable ruins on the steep hill side overlooking the estuary and the river to Kent, was not erected till some reigns after; nor were Ongar and Pleshy castles; but those of Canfield and Hedingham, the homes of the de Veres; of Clavering and Rayleigh, the lordships of Suene; of Stansted Mountfitchet, under Gernon; and of Walden, under Mandeville, rose in their frowning pride, and were the terror of the surrounding peasantry, who crouched submissively within their shadows. These castles were the rivets of the chain of despotism, which barred the return of the outcast Saxon aristocracy.

\* Bordarii, bordars, or bords, were husbandmen on the borders of the manor, who held little houses on condition of supplying provisions for the lord's table.

The introduction of the feudal law changed the tenure of the whole of the land in the county. The soil was granted by the king, who assumed the original ownership thereof, to his principal followers, on certain conditions, generally those of military service. The lord in turn re-granted it in smaller parcels to the occupiers and cultivators, stipulating for a certain amount of labour, or a supply of provisions for his household, or military service—the tenant of what was called a knight's fee being compelled to follow his lord to the field, and maintain himself there at his own expense for forty days. The failure in any of these duties involved the forfeiture of the land. Manor courts grew up as a natural consequence of the feudal system, and though they have now dwindled down to machines for squeezing fines and fees out of copyholders, who are the legal representatives of the farmer-warriors of that day, they were then tribunals of considerable importance. The lord exercised a jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases over his tenants, and in the administration of the law acted like a sovereign prince within his manor. The fair Essex heiress, if she happened to be left during her minority to the general wardship he claimed, was relieved from the trouble of hunting up a husband for herself. She was bound to accept the man her lord selected for her, however twisted his temper or uninviting his countenance; or if, with the perverse spirit of an Essex maiden of modern days, she repulsed the unwelcome suitor, she thereby sacrificed a portion of her worldly goods. By rejecting the match she forfeited "the value of the marriage"—that is, as much as any one would give to the lord for permission to marry her. In time the like custom was extended to the male heir. Thus the lord became the great matchmaker for all orphans upon his estate. Other rights of a monstrous nature are said to have been claimed by the Norman baron relative to the bride on the occasion of the marriage of a vassal and dependent. We may conceive the grinding oppression and immorality to which these powers led in the hands of dissolute tyrants.

The custom of the curfew bell was introduced as part of the stern discipline of the feudal system. The Essex yeoman was not permitted to enjoy as long as it pleased him the warmth of his own fire-side; nor could the Saxon churl, warmed into a rakish feeling by friendly hospitality, linger over the parting cup, unless he groped his way home in the dark, at the hazard of being picked up by a Norman patrol. The curfew sounded an hour after sun-set in every parish, and at its warning the householder was compelled to extinguish his fires and lights, on pain of fine and forfeiture. Sad was the

subjection to which the county in common with the whole kingdom was reduced.

“ Of freedom, property despoiled,  
And of their bulwarks, arms ; with castles crushed,  
With ruffians quarter'd o'er the bridled land,  
The shivering wretches at the curfew sound,  
Dejected sank into their sordid beds,  
And through the mournful gloom of ancient times,  
Mus'd sad, or thought of better.”

The historian tells us that Attila himself did not more justly deserve to be called the scourge of God than this merciless monarch ; “ a lust of power which no regard to justice could limit, and the most unsatiable avarice possessed his soul.” The Norman nobles were even worse than their king. Their licentiousness was so great that the Princess Matilda, afterwards Queen of Henry I. was obliged to wear the veil of a nun to preserve her honour. This mode was adopted by many young ladies. Henry of Huntingdon says “ the great men were enflamed with so violent a rage for money that they cared not by what means it was acquired, Sheriffs and judges were the most cruel of all tyrants, and greater plunderers than common thieves and robbers.” The Saxon Chronicle goes even further and asserts that the nobles grievously oppressed the poor people with building castles ; and “ when they were built they filled them with wicked men, or rather devils, who seized both men and women who they imagined had any money, threw them into prison, and put them to more cruel tortures than the martyrs ever endured. They suffocated some in mud, and suspended others by the feet, or the head, or the thumbs, kindling fires below them. They squeezed the heads of some with knotted cords, till they pierced the brain, while they threw others into dungeons swarming with serpents, and snakes, and toads.” Thus heavily did the Norman make the nation feel the weight of his mailed hand. The soul of the common people appeared to be crushed. The Saxon element, however, has long since risen again to the surface, and has absorbed the conquerors. If we take up Domesday Book, and run the eye down its register, we find not amongst the present possessors of the soil of Essex one of the names there recorded. The trade which they despised has risen up, and, amassing for its followers princely fortunes, has given to the descendants of the vassal the palace and the property of the lord. Their castles now excite only wonder at the massiveness of their ruined walls. At Pleshy, at Canfield, and at Ongar it is difficult to trace their sites. The banquet hall of Hedingham is abandoned to silence and festooned with the cobweb. Saffron Walden castle is a small shapeless wreck ; and when we visited it we found the

only remaining apartment, probably the keep, where the weary sentinel had rested or the prisoner had lingered, degraded to the purposes of a stable, and tenanted by an ass—a sad shock to the romantic memories which are supposed to hover over these ancient ruins. Colchester castle, perhaps the most perfect of them all, is only an object of interest to the prying antiquarian or the curious holiday visitor. These are all that now remain of the royal and baronial fortresses which once over-awed the county and held the turbulent inhabitants in subjection. The only trace of the Normans now to be found in Essex is in these martial ruins and in the arched windows of the churches which, with a strange mixture of licentiousness, crime, and piety, they erected and endowed.

## CHAPTER VII.

STATE OF THE PEOPLE AND THE BOROUGHES—PATRIOTIC ACT OF THE GOVERNOR OF COLCHESTER—COWARDICE OF THE EARL OF ESSEX—ASSIZES FIRST HELD IN THE COUNTY—ESSEX IN THE TIME OF THE CRUSADES.



OTWITHSTANDING the tyranny which so grievously oppressed the land, and the manner in which the old Saxon laws, though they still remained, were modified in spirit and warped to serve the Norman will, the Parliament, that great foundation on which our system of constitutional government has been built, was still preserved; and there are grounds for believing that Essex was represented in it not only by the barons and lordly prelates, but, notwithstanding the positive tone of Hume, by the common people. It is not our province to enter into the controversy as to the origin and history of this great council of the nation. It had existed amongst the Saxons under the names of Wittenagemotts, Mychelgemotts, Counciliums, and so forth. Ina's laws and the laws of Ethelbert were made in one of these assemblies. Ina's Parliament consisted of "the princes, bishops, nobles, earls, wisemen, elders, and people;" and a line in an old monkish verse describes the estates of the realm as

"The prelates, peers, the cities of their powers."

It is stated those bodies "consented to all laws, and without their consent nothing legislative was done"—thus discharging the substantial functions of Parliament under whatever title they were known. The Conqueror, then, did not venture to set this institution aside; and in the fourth year of his reign a Parliament was held in which the laws of King Edmund were



confirmed. Hody, an old writer, asserts that the people were admitted to the Parliament at this period, and consisted almost entirely of the common natural English, who were rising to power in consequence of the destruction of the Saxon aristocracy, of whom Henry of Huntingdon says scarcely any one remained. It is probable, therefore, that the people of Essex even at this period, through the tenants *in capite* who held the lands now cut up into small parcels amongst the freeholders, took some part in the great council of the nation; though the principle of the proud right of representation did not assume a regular form till the reign of Henry III. about 150 years afterwards.

It has been asserted that at this time the inhabitants of the borough towns had no elements of connexion to bind them together as corporate communities; and the condition of a burgess was little better than that of a villein. This does not appear to be borne out by the state of Colchester and Maldon. Both these places, as former seats of power and fortified towns, must have been of considerable importance. Not a fragment of a charter attests the fact, but there was a bond of union between the burgesses, who exercised some local authority. Those of Colchester held eighty acres of land in common, for which they contributed sixty shillings to the king's service if need were; if not it was divided amongst themselves. From the character of the monarch it is to be feared they found the royal need annually relieved their unlettered minds from the perplexities of the division. The privilege of coining money was also granted by the king to the burgesses of both Maldon and Colchester. Domesday Book records that they paid £20 for this right, "which was settled by Waleran; and they appealed to the king that he remitted them ten pounds; and Walcham, the bishop's tenant, demanded of them forty pounds." There must have been, then, in these towns the germ at least of those municipal institutions which, planted throughout the land, from the strength they gave to the commercial and trading classes and the taste they maintained for self-government, did so much in after times for the restoration of Saxon freedom.

William Rufus placed the government of Colchester under Eudo Dapifer, the Norman noble, who, we have seen, held possessions there in the former reign, and shared largely in the spoil of other parts of the county. He was appointed at the request of the inhabitants, who hoped beneath the shelter of his power to escape the confiscation and outlawries by which many of them had suffered under the Conqueror. Under his

rule the people enjoyed peace; the town improved in its architecture; the Castle was strengthened, and the walls were repaired. The noble Abbey of St. John was erected with a splendour of liberality almost unknown in our day; and the matin chant and vesper hymn of the cowed monks were heard echoing from its magnificent church along its numerous cloisters. Other public edifices and mansions for the wealthy were "reared in a style previously unbeheld and probably unconceived of by the more simple Saxon inhabitants."

Under Henry I. and the usurper Stephen, Essex lay in the sullen quietude of despotism. In the time of the latter, whose Queen died at Hedingham Castle in 1152, little is recorded of the county; but there is no doubt it suffered in that wild struggle for the throne, and was scourged by the feudal system, then at its height. The family of Suene, the hereditary Earl of Essex, appear to have embraced the cause of Matilda, as we find the monarch conferred that title, which carried with it the rule of the county, upon the Geoffroy de Mandeville who reigned in baronial state at Saffron Walden. This nobleman, however, soon deserted him. Lured by the winning smiles and more substantial offers of the empress, which included ample grants of land and the hereditary shrievalties of London, Middlesex, Hertford, and Essex, he prepared to go over to her standard. The king, informed of this, seized him at St. Albans, stripped him of his honours, and extorted from him the surrender of the castles of Walden and Pleshy. The proud Earl, thus deprived of his fortresses, and with them of the power he had plotted to carry over to Stephen's rival, became the chieftain of a band of political outlaws, was excommunicated for plundering Ramsey Abbey, and was at length killed by an arrow before Burwell Castle in Cambridgeshire. It is related that a party of Knights Templars, who were accidentally passing, took his body, enclosed it in a lead coffin, and conveying it with them hung it upon a tree in the orchard of the old Temple, London. So fearful was the sentence of excommunication in those days that they durst not bury it.

The county at this time was desolated by the fierce and vengeful wars which the barons, freed from the restraint of government, carried on with each other in this reign to such an extent that it is recorded the land was left untilled, the instruments of husbandry were abandoned or destroyed, and a grievous famine was the result. These feuds, clothed by the character of the reign in the garb of a public cause, may have devastated the villages of Essex and laid its lands waste. The knights and vassals of the noble de Vere may have mustered in the court



yards of Hedingham to march in arms against the de Mandevilles at Walden; the retainers of de Mountfitchet may have gathered from all the dependencies of that fortress, laid siege to the castles of Hadleigh and Rayleigh, taken great spoil, and carried the fair daughters of Rochford Hundred away captive; but there was no telegraph to wing the news; no *Times* or *Chronicle* to record it; and the memory of the event did not long survive the misery it occasioned.

When Henry II. ascended the throne, the barons had practically realized the proposition of the great writer of satirical romance—"You shall be king, and I will be prime minister over you." The barons were virtually the masters of the country, oppressing the people and controlling the sovereign. To counteract this, the monarch adopted the policy of raising and strengthening the commercial classes, while he depressed the power of the barons. He chartered and largely extended the privileges of many towns, amongst them those of Colchester and Maldon, which date their first actual incorporation from this reign. Colchester, which had been previously held in fee-farm by the Sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire, was let to the burgesses at a yearly rent of the same nature of £42, a large sum at that time, when four hens were valued at 2d., a stalled ox at a shilling, a tun of wine at £1, and a quarter of wheat at 1s. Maldon, too, acquired the confirmation of extensive rights (as will be hereafter seen in the history of the Borough) and the charter shows it was then a place of some maritime importance, as it exempts the burgesses from all foreign services, except the furnishing of one ship occasionally for the king's use at their own expense for 40 days. To reduce the powers of mischief which the barons possessed, Henry set about the dangerous task of demolishing all their newly erected castles, and dismantling others, which had become the sanctuaries of free-booters and rebels. The owners of all murmured—some resisted. Hugh Mortimer resolved to hold his castle of Brighthelm; and at the siege which followed, an affecting instance occurred of Essex bravery and loyal devotion. In a *melée* before the walls, a death blow was aimed by a brawny warrior at the person of the monarch. Hubert, the Governor of Colchester, perceived it descending, and flinging himself before the sovereign, received it, sacrificing his own life in saving that of the king. Royal gratitude for the noble deed was shown in the care and protection of Hubert's only daughter, for whom the king found a meet husband in William de Langvale, who succeeded her father in the rule of the burgh. Close to this act, history holds up another county man, a dimming case of

cowardice and desertion. When the king undertook the invasion of Wales, the hereditary Earl of Essex, restored to the place from which Stephen had displaced him, as royal standard bearer, accompanied the army. Of course as was the custom of the day, and in terms of their tenure, the knights and military tenants around his castles of Clavering and Rayleigh, and from his other 53 lordships in the county, marched with him and swelled the royal force, but it was to share his ignominy and witness his fall. In a narrow pass the coward Earl, setting up the traitor cry of "the king is dead," threw down the royal standard and fled. For this act he was accused of felony, vanquished in trial by single combat, stripped of his large estates, and thrust into a convent, to expiate, by the earnest devotion of the monk, the weaknesses of the soldier. Henry restored the Earldom of Essex in the second son of the outlawed de Mandeville, who thus regained the family castles and estates. He acquired, too, a place of public influence and profit. The title of Earl was not then, as now, one of barren honour. That officer was virtually governor of the county. He held courts, received the third penny of all fines, and other perquisites, the Sheriff being merely his deputy; though successive changes have since placed nearly all the business of the civil government of the county in his hands, and reduced the power of the Earl to that of a private gentleman.

It was about this period that assizes for the trial of offenders by persons bearing the king's commission were first held in the county. The security for property, which we have seen prevailed under Alfred's laws, had ceased. The barons individually executed justice in their own lordships, or collectively in the county court. Crimes of the most frightful character could be expiated by a pecuniary fine. Having, therefore, improved his military establishments by commuting for a money payment the services of the turbulent knights and unskilful and disorderly tenants, the king set about remedying the abuses of the law courts. He divided the kingdom into four divisions, and appointed itinerant justices to go circuit in each—"prelates or considerable noblemen, who, besides carrying the authority of the king's commission, were able, by the dignity of their own character, to give weight and credit to the laws"—to decide the cases in the counties, and thus protect the inferior gentry and common people from the oppressions of the local barons. The Essex sittings of these royal justices appear first to have been held at Brentwood, then a sort of county town, with, it will be afterwards seen, rather a turbulent population; and local tradition still points to the antique gable on the south side of

the street as the remains of the ancient assize house and prison. This system of administering justice gradually became matured, though for ages after the lords continued to try causes and even inflict death punishments within their manors. The sittings of the judges, however, were migratory. There is some evidence in the records of a suit as to the right of the Abbess of Waltham Holy Cross to a manor in Takely, that in 1285 they were in Chelmsford. In 1568 the assizes were held at Witham. But Chelmsford, as the centre of the county, was selected as the shire town, and the assizes, being transferred to it, have been holden there for some centuries. The judges, however, dared not venture so far into the country without a military guard, of which the band of javelin-men, now improvised for the occasion out of the mechanics and labourers of the neighbourhood, are the burlesque and the shadow.

While all that we have recorded in this chapter was passing—while the last three sovereigns were occupied with baronial feuds and foreign wars—while the celebrated constitutions of Clarendon were being matured, and Henry II. was engaged in his quarrel with Becket and the Pope, the leaven of a new excitement was stirring all Christendom, and by which Essex could not remain unmoved. The cry of Peter the Hermit, sanctioned by the policy of Pope Urban II. had gone through Europe in 1095, and the Crusaders were mustering for the rescue of the Holy Land. At first, the object was only to secure to the Christian pilgrim a free passage to the holy sepulchre; but as the forces waxed strong, the purpose of the war swelled into the possession of Jerusalem and the founding of a throne in the holy city. The second crusade, it is known, led by Louis of France, in 1147, numbered 140,000 armed knights and a million of foot soldiers, most of whom perished. In these two expeditions England as a nation took no part. But King Henry II. granted a tax, which of course every Essex man paid, of 2d in the pound for a year, and 1d. for three years, upon the whole kingdom, for the sustenance of the struggle in Palestine; and he was preparing to join the third Crusade of 1189, when he died. When Richard I. the Lion of England, led the power of this country to victory before the walls of Ascalon, we have evidence, direct and indirect, that when "nobles, artizans, peasants, and even priests enrolled their names," and the direction of the Crusader's march was considered "the only road to heaven," the universal phrenzy raged in every Essex home. Nobles girt on their swords; and from the partition or alienation of much of the landed property of the county at this period, it may be concluded that here, as else-

where, the lords of the soil mortgaged or sold their estates to complete their warlike fittings, and raise funds for the expedition. The vassal turned from the cultivation of the field to have the red cross embroidered upon his breast. The lady bound on the sword knot, the work of her own hands; and then sat herself down in her Essex hall to rule the estate in her lord's absence, and think, now proudly now pensively, of the doings of her knight in the Holy Land. And some from this county are recorded as having nobly distinguished themselves.

"Where their blow of vengeance fell,  
Woe to the swarth infidel."

Of Hugh de Neville, the lord of Wethersfield, who sailed with Richard, it is told that when in Palestine he shot an arrow into a lion's breast, and when the brute rose against him, coolly caught him by the beard and thrust his sword into his heart—an exploit portrayed on the seal to a deed in the British Museum, bearing around it the inscription—"Sigillum Hugonis de Nevilla." Robert de Vere, too, who founded the Priory of Hatfield Broad Oak, where he was buried, cross-legged, as was the custom with those who had been in the Holy Land, acquitted himself gallantly. The legendary lore of the Crusaders says of him that while fighting victoriously against the infidel, a star fell from heaven on his shield, and in commemoration of the portent of divine approval, a mullet was added to his family coat of arms. Sir Simon de Baud, of Corringham, described as a valiant knight, took the cross and died in Palestine in 1174; and his successor, Nicholas de Baud, fought against the Saracens in Spain. William Lord Roos, one of the proprietors of Thaxted, fell in the later Crusade of 1192. The celebrated order of Knights Templars, too, which sprung out of these wars, was closely connected with Essex. These renowned friar-warriors obtained possessions, including lands in Fryerning and other parishes, with the manors of Witham and Cressing. At the latter place they built a priory; and they also erected (as will be hereafter seen) the remarkable church of Little Maplestead, on the plan of the Holy Sepulchre, at Jerusalem,—the manor-house of the parish becoming a preceptory or nursery for the order, endowed by the devotion of the time by more than 700 benefactions.

Others connected with this county distinguished themselves in these wars, which, whatever may be thought of them, aided in softening the manners of the people by the introduction of feelings of chivalry, lit up the fire of romance in our literature, and helped on political liberty by the extension they gave to commerce and the manner in which they tended to undermine the feudal system.

## CHAPTER VIII.

FORESTS OF ESSEX AND THE FOREST LAWS—ESSEX MEN AT RUNNYMEDE—CONFLICTS IN THE COUNTY BETWEEN JOHN AND THE BARONS—OCCUPATION OF COLCHESTER AND HEDINGHAM CASTLE BY THE FRENCH—CAPTURE OF HUBERT DE BURGH AT BRENTWOOD.

THE game laws, against which we occasionally hear bursts of indignation from popular speakers and the press, are a grievance as old as the Norman dynasty, or older. The forests were fearful sources of feuds and oppression; and Essex being covered extensively by one of these royal nuisances, was frequently excited by the occurrences and conflicts to which it gave rise. The wild woodlands which at one period stretched over so large a portion of the county became vested in the Crown, and long after the conquest these tracts of wilderness were found in the heart of Essex. Here the sovereigns and the gallants of the Courts hawked and hunted during their sojourn at Havering-bower, or the palace of Chigwell, which appears to have been erected solely for a royal hunting lodge; or in their visits to the palaces of New Hall and Writtle. The latter Stow tells us was built by King John in 1211, about a quarter of a mile from Writtle Green, on the left hand side of the road leading to Chelmsford, the building covering an acre of ground, and being surrounded by a deep moat. In this forest the stag was chased and the wild boar, an important part of the game of these woods, brought to bay,—for the fox appears to have been looked upon with contempt by the Nimrods of those days. Here, in later times, the outlaw, like him of Sherwood, composed of about equal portions of the poacher, the bandit and the hero, found ready shelter. And here, too, at a period bordering on our own days, the burglar and the highwayman shaped their caves and concealed their plunder. The forest regulations were terrifically severe, though often set at naught. The killing of a stag in these hunting grounds of the king was regarded as more heinous than murder. The slaughter of a man could be expiated by a pecuniary fine; but one of the game laws of the Conqueror enacted that the killing a deer, boar, or hare in his forests should be punished with the loss of the offender's eyes. This law was renewed by Richard I. with the addition of further disgusting mutilation. Civilization, with its multiplying people, increasing the necessity for larger

supplies of food, and thus raising the value of land, has laid so steady a siege to the forest of Essex, as it was originally called, that no idea can be formed of its extent from the remnants of it which are left, under the names of Hainault, Waltham, and Epping. It stretched at one period along the whole of the northern boundary, from nearly Bow to Cambridge-shire, filling up the whole of the vast space between Hertfordshire and the line of road from Brentwood and Romford in that direction—even extending beyond it—and running from Bishops Stortford to Colchester. This latter portion was stripped of its forestal character by King John. Stephen had previously disafforested Tendring Hundred and given it over to the husbandman, who has long since converted it into a fertile and flourishing district. Parts of Barstable abutting upon Rochford Hundred were treated as forest less than 800 years ago: in 1563, £500 was paid to the Crown for leave to disafforest Jarvis Hall and various other lands in South Bemfleet. Even Chelmsford, the centre of the county, was hemmed in on both sides by these royal hunting grounds. In the 27th of Edward the First, the Earl of Oxford obtained a license to enlarge his park at East Hanningfield by eleven acres, “being within the bounds of the forest;” and the records of the Exchequer show that in the same reign there was a perambulation of “the forest at Writtle.” Gradually these open woodlands have disappeared. The popular feeling, in no age very strong in favour of game preserving, was aided in this case, when hunting formed so important a part of the pastimes of the nobility, by the barons and the landowners—the predecessors of those who are now the greatest sticklers for upholding the laws of the chase, and the sworn opponents and punishers of poachers of all descriptions. The rights of the Crown, as they were called, trenched seriously upon the privileges of the local lords, lands which had long been granted out, and grubbed up, being still considered as forest. This led continually to the institution of vexatious suits, and the exaction of heavy fines from the king’s tenants and the freemen. At length it produced open conflicts with the Crown; and the united barons, by an act of compulsion, wrung from King John the Charter of Forests—“a bar,” says the historian, “to oppression, and a happy instrument of improving our agriculture.” “Every article of this charter,” adds Rapin, “is a clear evidence how the subject was oppressed under the pretence of preserving the royal forest.” The spirit of that charter was jealously guarded. In the conditions exacted from Henry III. an additional charter of forests was included, by

which capital punishment for these offences was abolished, and they were made punishable by fine and imprisonment. Further, the proprietors of the land recovered the right of cutting and using their own wood at pleasure. The Commons gave Edward the First the bribe of a fifteenth of all the goods of the kingdom to have its provisions carried out.\* From this period the forest of Essex rapidly disappeared, as shown by the perambulations made in the reigns of four succeeding monarchs.

In the olden time of woodcraft there were various local laws for the regulation of the forest and those who dwelt within its borders. A toll was exacted from a man if he required a passage through the forest, on account of the disquiet it gave to the wild beasts. It was a fine for any one to keep a mastiff there without having three claws of one of its fore feet struck off; and every inhabitant of the forest, on reaching the mature age of twenty-one, was compelled to take an oath in the following quaint old lines, which certainly were not likely to awe the mind by their dignity, or exorcise evil thoughts by their sweetness; but they were supposed to have a restraining influence in the solitary sylvan ramble, when a hare crossed the path or a stag came within reach of the cross-bow—

“ You shall true liege man be  
 Unto the king's majesty ;  
 Unto the beasts of the forest you shall no hurt do,  
 Nor to anything that does belong thereunto.  
 The offences of others you shall not conceal,  
 But to the utmost of your power you shall them reveal,  
 Unto the officers of the forest,  
 Or to them who may see them redrest.  
 All these things you shall see done  
 So help your God at his holy doom.”

The office of Lord Warden of the forest, now in the Earl

\* This levy was literally a fifteenth of the value of all a man possessed, and the mode of levying that kind of property-tax—not uncommon at that time—will be seen from the following extracts from the roll of the assessment in this instance; they refer to parties residing in Colchester, and the latter proves that the humblest poverty did not escape the search of the direct tax-gatherer:—

“ Roger, the dyer, had on Michaelmas-day last in his treasury or cupboard, 1 silver buckle, price 18d. ; 1 cup of Mayer (maple), pr. 18d. In his chamber 2 gowns, pr. 20s. ; 2 beds, pr. half a mark. (Beds were uniformly of straw in this reign, not excepting those occupied by royalty itself.) 1 napkin and 1 towel, price 2s. In his house 1 ewer with a basin, pr. 14d. ; 1 andiron, pr. 8d. In his kitchen 1 brass pot, pr. 20d. ; 1 brass skillet, pr. 6d. ; 1 brass pipkin, 8d. ; 1 trivet, pr. 4d. In his brewhouse 1 quarter of oats, pr. 2s. ; wood ashes, pr. half a mark ; 1 great vat for dying, pr. 2s. 6d. Item. 1 cow, pr. 5s. ; 1 calf, pr. 2s. ; 2 pigs, pr. 2s., each 12d. ; 1 sow, price 15d. ; billet wood and faggots for firing, pr. 1 mark. Sum 75s. 5d., fifteenth of which, 4s. 9d.”

“ John Fitz-elias, weaver, had, the day aforesaid, 1 old coat, pr. 2s. ; 1 lamb, pr. 6d. Sum 2s. 6d., fifteenth of which, 2d.”



of Mornington, through the marriage of his father, the Hon. Mr. Long Pole Wellesley with Miss Tilney, the great heiress of Wanstead House, was formerly a post of great importance and profit. The warden had the same duty in the forest as the sheriff had in the county. The right belonged for centuries to the De Veres, Earls of Oxford, the lords of Hedingham Castle; and the receipts from it must have been enormous. The steward appointed a lieutenant, a riding forester, and three yeomen foresters; and the perquisites of the warden and steward are thus stated—"They had all the deer-browsing wood, all wayfs and strays, within the limits of the forest; likewise all the amerciements in the swan-motes and wood comptes, agreeably to the assize of the forest (the amerciements for venison and the bodies of oaks only excepted.) Upon the sale of every wood they were entitled to the second best oak contained therein; and the buyer and seller thereof were obliged to present them with one bow and one broad arrow, paying at the same time each of them one penny out of every shilling. They likewise received from the sale of every covert or hedge-row of every shilling, one penny." There was also a chief forester, generally a member of some noble family, one of the Fitz-Archers of Copt Hall holding it in the reign of Edward the First; but with the decay and diminution of the forest the office appears to have become virtually extinct. There should also be four Verderers, elected by the freeholders of the county at large, but the deaths of Mr. Sergeant Arabin and Mr. Conyers, whose places it has not been deemed necessary to fill up, have reduced them to two—Mr. Lockwood and Major Palmer. Anciently important duties attached to all these officers. There were three courts in which they exercised their power. The Verderers' or Forty-day Court, as it was called from being held every forty days, was the first that took cognizance of offences. The Verderers, as judicial officers, appointed to observe and keep the assizes and laws of the forest, were sworn "to view, receive, and enrol the attachments and presentments of all manner of trespasses of vert (that is, anything growing in the forest that would afford cover for the deer) and venison, and to do equal justice as well to the poor as to the rich." They punished trifling offences, but sent other presentments to the Swanimote Court, where the matters were decided upon by a jury; and then returned to the Court of Justice Seat—the highest forest Court. This was held by the Lord Chief Justice in Eyre, under the King's Commission, and, though limited to forest offences, it seems to have been similar to a Court of Assize. Formerly these Courts were held at Chelmsford; but as the



forest was driven by the agricultural pioneer to the northern and western borders, they were removed to Chigwell. The sittings have taken place there for the last three hundred years. Nought but shadows of the two first courts are now left; and the Court of Justice Seat was extinguished by the 10th of George the Third, which transferred its powers to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests.

The forest in its present state, though it adds to the picturesque of that part of the county, is of little value to the Crown. The parts of it about Leyton and Woodford are pleasant airing grounds for the inhabitants of eastern London on holidays, to whom it is a luxury to breathe the fresh air of a real forest. Doubtless it is a special delight for the fair labourers in the factories of fashion to escape from their prison-houses, and, as a wag has sung—

“ Like Robin Hood, to feel themselves the free,  
And draw their *beaux* beneath the greenwood tree.”

Even in this respect, however, the popularity of the forest has fallen off since excursion trains have stood at all the outlets of London ready to whirl the parties further countryward; though the rabble rout that burlesques the grandeur of the old royal hunting party is still to be heard in the forest on Easter Monday. Fair and bright, too, have been the days of forest life under the Fairlop oak, which stood near Great Ilford. This tree was of such great age that Mr. Gilpin says the traditions of the county traced it half-way up to the Christian era. The trunk measured 36 feet in girth, and the branches at one period covered an area of 300 feet in circumference. In 1805 the trunk was set on fire and considerably injured by a gipsy party who had established a holiday kitchen in too close proximity to the monarch of the forest; and though considerable care was afterwards taken to preserve it, the work of decay went on. Romantic traditions were current in the district as to the origin of the fair held for more than a century on the spot. The facts seem to be, that about 150 years ago, Mr. Day, a large block and pump maker, of Wapping, formed a picnic party within the shades of this gigantic oak; and, pleased with this snatch of rural life, returned again and again, as the first Friday in July came round, to enjoy the forest air and the summer festival. Other parties followed the example; booths shot up; and the fair was established. Out of a large limb which was shivered from his favourite tree, Mr. Day had a coffin manufactured, and in this he was buried at Barking, in 1767, at the fine old age of 84. Part of the tree was afterwards converted into a beautiful carved pulpit for St. Pancras Church in London.

Latterly the character of the congregation from country and town grew so questionable, and so gross the revelry, that within the last five or six years it was found necessary to prevent the further desecration of the sylvan scene, and Fairlop was cut down and cast into the fire, together with all the abominations to which it had given rise.

Some parts of the forest are tolerably well timbered, but large tracts of it are covered with pollard horn-beams, with scarcely an oak raising its stately head amongst them. Yet the land is well adapted to the production of timber for the navy. According to the finding of a royal Commission in 1640, by whom a perambulation was made for the settlement of the bounds and metes of what remained of the great forest, the following parishes were wholly within the boundary—Wanstead, Leyton, Walthamstow, Woodford, Loughton, Chigwell, Lambourne, Stapleford Abbots, Waltham Holy Cross, Epping, and Nazing. The parishes partly within and partly without the forest were Chingford, Stratford, East Ham, Little Ilford, Barking, Dagenham, Navestock, and Theydon Bois. The tract thus marked out includes about 60,000 acres, of which the Commissioners of Land Revenue state, at the date of their report, 48,000 had become enclosed private property, and 12,000 acres remained unenclosed woods and wastes. This report adds—"The Crown has in this, as in other forests, an unlimited right to keep deer in all the unenclosed woods and wastes within the perambulation, unless some parts have been disafforested by grants; and the owners and occupiers of the lands within the bounds of the forest have a right of common of pasture for horses and cows, no other cattle being commonable in the forest." Every 40s. rent gave a right to turn out one cow and one horse. These rights still continue, together with the privilege of various individuals and the poor, in some parishes, to cut wood under certain restrictions. The deer have been killed off or carried away within the last few years; but after being branded by forest reeves, who are appointed by the parish for the purpose, and receive a small fee, large numbers of cattle are turned out during 11 months in the year—May being the "fence-month," during which the old laws strictly prohibit any animals being left loose in the forest, lest they should disturb the deer when about to fawn. Since the report referred to, the waste has been largely curtailed by the open assault of the legal enclosure and the slow sap of the insidious encroachment. About 15 years ago a strong effort was made by the Verderers, in which Major Palmer took a very active part, to check the invaders, and test the rights of the Lords of

the Manors to grant enclosures of the soil of the forest without the consent of the Forty-day Court. Public meetings, too, were held, and some effect was produced. The Crown, however, appears desirous of getting rid of its connexion with the forest as a profitless incumbrance. There are within the forest a great many undivided manors, with varying rights, some with loosely defined powers. The Crown, therefore, has in some cases sold, and in others is endeavouring to sell, its rights to the lords—a course which will no doubt have a considerable effect upon the forest itself, and on the interests of the poorer foresters and freeholders.

Favourable as the strong loamy soil is to the growth of the oak tree, and convenient as much of it lies for water carriage by the Roden, which is navigable from Ilford to the Thames, little timber has been sent from it to the dock-yards. Seventy years ago it was found from an official survey that there was not on the average one oak of thirty feet and upwards, and less than four of any size, to an acre. These matters have not since much improved. As, therefore, the 2,000 acres of Hainault, which by an Act of Parliament have been cleared and converted into farms within the last few years, were found to pay their own expenses, and are now letting at 30s. an acre, and there is little doubt that the remaining 10,000 or 11,000 acres of waste and unproductive soil, if cleared and drained and fenced, would, from their proximity to London, yield a like rental, it is most desirable that labour should be allowed to go on with the work, wielding its spade like a magic wand, and bidding the wheat-ear supersede the scrubby brushwood.

Higher questions than those of forestal rights brought King John into conflict with the nation. In the struggle between the barons, who were backed by the budding desire for liberty which, for their own purposes, they had encouraged in the people, and that weak and despicable sovereign, Essex bore no inconsiderable part. It sent forth its nobles to that martial league which wrung from the monarch the great Charter; and when royal treachery sought to rob the nation of the advantages of that political reform, it became again the battle-field of liberty. When the barons, resolved to exact compliance with their demands, assembled with their 2,000 knights, besides their retainers and "inferior persons without number," as historians describe the populace of that day, at Brackly, and received that fierce reply of the feeble king which drove them to extremities, Robert Fitz-Walter, the Lord of Little Dunmow, was chosen as their general—"the mareschal of the army of God and of Holy Church." In that character he negotiated Magna Charta on the celebrated

plains of Runnymede. His name appears to that immortal document. He, too, was one of the council of the twenty-five selected by the barons to be the guardians of the popular rights thus exacted by the power of the people and the point of the sword; and in the same noble list we find the name of Robert de Vere, who had marched with his force from Hedingham Castle, swelled by the retainers on his vast estates elsewhere; of Roger Bigod, the Lord of Pebmarsh; and of De Montfitchet, who, from his stronghold at Stansted, had led a band of Essex men to take part in the glorious work of laying the corner stone of English freedom. When John called in hordes of savage mercenaries to root up the tree of liberty he had been so reluctantly compelled to plant, the Earl of Winchester at the head of a body of these foreign troops marched into Essex, and in 1215 laid siege to Colchester; but hearing that the barons from London were hastening to its relief, he retired from its walls and marched to Bury. The king, however, soon after obtained possession of the town, but not until it had been plundered. The same year he besieged Hedingham Castle, which made a brave defence and held out long against him, but at last succumbed to his power. The barons, placing too much trust in a royal oath, had not kept their forces together, and were taken unawares. Still, in spite of disasters, and the terrors of excommunication with which the Pope came to the aid of the king, they continued to battle for the rights they had won. In the mean time the county was exposed to the ravages of both armies. The king's troops desolated those parts which belonged to the barons; the forces of the barons retaliated on the districts favourable to the royal cause. Hume says—and it was no doubt a picture of Essex at that time—"The ravenous and barbarous mercenaries, incited by a cruel and enraged prince, were let loose against the estates, tenants, manors, houses, and parks of the barons, and spread devastation over the face of the kingdom. Nothing was to be seen but the flames of villages and castles reduced to ashes, the consternation and misery of the inhabitants, the tortures exercised by the soldiery to make them reveal their concealed treasures, and reprisals no less barbarous committed by barons and their partizans on the royal demesnes, and the estates of such as still adhered to the crown."

Driven to extremity, and with the new raised temple of liberty threatening to fall and crush them, the barons resorted to the desperate expedient of calling in foreign aid, and Prince Louis hastened with a French army to their succour.\* The

\* The monkish tales of the time give the following more romantic version of the cause of these wars, and the invoking of French aid:—"At Little

scale of war was thus turned against the king, and he died of grief at Newark, leaving, we are told, a character which "is nothing but a complication of vices, ruinous to himself and destructive to his people." The death of the king, however, did not restore tranquillity or silence the din of war in Essex. Prince Louis coveted that which he had aided to conquer. He laid claim to the crown; and to secure it, sought to obtain possession of the fortified towns and castles. Marching into Essex, he over-ran the whole county, and appeared in force before Colchester, which shut its gates and stood upon its defence against the foreign intruder. The Prince occupied it, however, after a vigorous siege; and the French flag floated upon the walls and castle top—not, as it now does on days of public rejoicing, a sign of friendly union between the two nations, but as an emblem of foreign mastery. Hedingham Castle, too, was invested, and carried either by starvation or storm. Louis appears to have established his power over most of the Eastern Counties, and there was peril of his realizing the project he was believed to entertain of making England a province of France. With this prospect the patriotic spirit of the barons rose again and their zeal for their ally sunk. Power in the vigorous hands of Pembroke the Protector led to repeated victories; and the French Prince, compounding for the safety of his adherents, gave up Colchester and Hedingham Castles, and his other strongholds, and departed the kingdom.

After the death of the Protector, feuds broke out between the

Dunmow, with her father Robert Fitz-Walter, lived the fair Matilda. King John, coveting this fair and precious lady, and her father not consenting to his unlawful desires, that occasioned a war between him and his barons. And the latter, being received into the city of London, did the king and his friends a great deal of mischief, as, on the other hand, the king destroyed principally Baynard's castle, and seized the other castles and tenements of the barons. Whereupon Robert Fitz-Walter, Roger Fitz-Robert, and Richard de Montfichet crossed the sea, and went to invite the king of France to come and revenge their quarrels. Matilda abode in the meantime at Dunmow, where a messenger came to her under pretence of love, and because she would not consent, poisoned all her liquors, and so she died. Other stories say she was poisoned with an egg cooked up for her by the messenger. The king of France began to ravage England, but a truce being made by the two kings, Robert Fitz-Walter, who had been forced to fly the realm, whose estates had been seized and his castle demolished, was restored to King John's favor for his knightly achievement and strength of body in vanquishing an English knight at a tournament in France before the kings of England and France, between whom a peace was made by Robert's mediation. And afterwards the said Robert and the two barons above-mentioned stayed always with King John." This story is generally supposed to be a fiction fabricated by the monks in favor of their patron Robert Fitz-Walter, partly to excuse his rashness and folly, in being one of the ringleaders in stirring up the King of France to come and invade this kingdom.

Bishop of Winchester, who was appointed Regent, and Hubert de Burgh, who became Chief Justiciary. Eventually the latter was expelled from office, but he refused to give up his accounts, and fled. Pursued by the young king's soldiers, he sought a sanctuary in a small chapel at Brentwood,—probably the one founded there about that time by the abbot and monks of St. Osyth's Priory, as a halting-place or station for pilgrims to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket. The priestly authorities of the olden time claimed and exercised "the right of sanctuary,"—that was, that the flying criminal to whom they afforded shelter should be safe from the stroke of justice while he remained within their walls. This probably had a salutary effect in those days, when blood was so profusely shed for political offences, and a discomfited Minister was sent, not to the opposition benches of the House of Commons, but to the scaffold. The rough soldiers, however, in this instance paid no respect to the sanctity of the place. They rushed into the chapel, and, seizing Hubert in spite of the anathemas of his protectors, dragged him forth, chained his feet beneath his horse's belly, and in that ignominious manner marched with him from Brentwood to the Tower. This outrage upon the privileges of the church roused the whole of the clergy, who considered that the principle of their rights was invaded. The Bishop of London, as the head of the diocese, was so incensed that he menaced with excommunication all who had been concerned in the transaction. Before this awful threat even the king quailed; but by a piece of cunning casuistry he secured the object which he durst not carry out with the strong hand. He gave orders that Hubert should be safely re-conducted to his asylum at Brentwood; but at the same time he sent orders to the sheriffs of Essex and Hertfordshire that upon pain of death they should not suffer him to escape, or permit any one to convey to him food and nourishment. How long he thus remained there an object of excitement and pity amongst the good folks of the village, we are not told; but hunger and thirst at length drove him forth, and surrendering himself to the king's officers, he was re-committed to the Tower. After various vicissitudes he was restored to royal favour; but the visit to Brentwood and the hard fare he met thereat had cooled his ambition, and he never again showed a wish to be re-instated in power.

## CHAPTER IX.

**ROBERT BRUCE—THE LORD OF LANGENHOE'S ATTACK ON COLCHESTER—OUTBREAK AT BRENTWOOD, AND WAT TYLER'S REBELLION—DEFEAT OF THE REBELS AT BILLERICAY—RECALL OF THE CONCESSIONS, AND MARCH OF THE KING TO CHELMSFORD.**

**W**HEN Roger Bigod stood forward as a bold reformer of the state, and secured for his order a degree of power which ended in aristocratic usurpation, many of the armed barons who gathered round him in parliament were from Essex. The records of the county, however, in the three following reigns are meagre. The celebrated Robert Bruce was an Essex land-owner in the time of Edward I. He possessed the estate of Hatfield Bury, at Hatfield Broad Oak; but he was deprived of this by the king after the successful assertion of his right to the throne of Scotland and his coronation at Scone. The manor of Chingford in Chingford Comites, belonging to the Earl of Athol, who was hanged on a gibbet fifty feet high, and his body burnt for adherence to Bruce, was also seized by the Crown in this quarrel. We learn that in the twelve months' siege of Calais by Edward the Third the seamen of our coasts took an active part. Colchester alone sent five ships and 170 mariners; and after the celebrated battle of Cressy, which, notwithstanding the lapse of five hundred years, still figures in after-dinner orations as one of England's most memorable feats of arms, the custody of some of the prisoners taken there was committed to the bailiffs of that town. In the same reign the borough was compelled to defend with the sword the right for which the council has lately done battle with the burgesses in the Court of Queen's Bench—the Colne fishery. The circumstances afford a curious illustration of the lawless pretensions of the nobility of those days. Brandenham, the lord of Langenhoe, coveted the fishery of these waters, and, baffled in his efforts to obtain it by subtle infringements, resorted to force. He besieged the town for three months, and by repeated attempts to burn it kept the inhabitants in constant terror. The stronger arm of the king, who was appealed to, saved the houses of the townsfolk from the ruffian invader of their right, who was at length compelled to sue for pardon, confessing he had been guilty of many felonies, and retained in his house at Langenhoe several thieves and robbers as his



servants. He sought safety in a sanctuary ; and a year or two after the estate passed out of the hands of the titled robber.

Soon after the accession of Richard the Second a new, and at that time it was considered a strange, spirit began to manifest itself in the lower orders of society. The concessions which the barons had exacted, as a sop to induce the common people to support their pretensions, had awakened a desire for a larger degree of independence. A revolt of the peasants in France was talked of amongst the serfs, and added to their sense of personal slavery, which was more general in England than in any other country of Europe. John Ball, who called himself "St. Mary's priest of York and now of Colchester," taking advantage of this feeling, went about the county preaching the doctrine of equality in its widest sense—the right of all to the soil, and inveighing against the insolence of one class in setting up distinctions of superiority over another. This was eagerly listened to and pondered over by the multitude. The mine of insurrection was thus prepared, and the spark which exploded it was struck from the anvil of an Essex blacksmith. A poll-tax of three groats a head on all above the age of fifteen, gave edge to the uneasy discontent of the degraded and, it may be truly said, the oppressed populace. This impost had always been one of the most hated of government exactions ; and in this instance an attempt to levy it with vigour drove the people to desperation. The ruling powers, pressed by a war with France, for the support of which the poll-tax was professedly laid on, finding it not sufficiently productive, sent out special commissioners to quicken its flow into the treasury. The Essex collectors were reprimanded for their remissness in not reaping a full harvest of groats from every head that had seen fifteen summers ; and thus urged, they went forth with that stern sense of duty which power is so apt on all occasions to place in the foreground as an apology for its want of feeling. One of them entered the shop of a sturdy blacksmith, at Brentwood, while he was engaged in the business of his craft. Attracted by his tread, a young maiden just in her teens came bounding forth from where she had been gambolling or watching her father weld the iron shoe. The quick eye of the tax-gatherer scanned her womanly height, and in the name of King Richard II. he demanded the tax upon her head. The blacksmith demurred ; the girl, he said, had not arrived at taxable maturity. The dispute grew warm ; and the townsfolk gathered around to listen. At length the taxing-man "offered to produce a very indecent proof that the girl was above fifteen, and at the same



time laid hold of the maid." Heated by the quarrel, and exasperated by the insult to his child, the blacksmith with brawny arm raised his ponderous sledge hammer, and smote the tax-gatherer dead to the earth. This was the first blood shed in Wat Tyler's rebellion. The bystanders applauded the deed. Cries for further vengeance and demands for liberty were heard. The people instantly began to arm; and as the news spread throughout the surrounding country, multitudes flocked into the town, to take a part in this first desperate and tumultuous movement of the common people. Thomas Bampton, one of the magistrates of the district, proceeded to the arrest of some of the leaders; but they were instantly liberated. The commissioners of the poll-tax and their attendants fled hastily to London; and the mob, left uncontrolled, proceeded to the most atrocious excesses. Houses were plundered, property was destroyed; several active officers of the government were murdered, and their heads were carried about on poles in triumph. "The flame," says Hume, "spread in an instant over the county; it soon propagated itself into that of Kent, Hertford, Surrey, Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Lincoln. Before the government had the least warning of the danger the disorder had grown beyond control or opposition; the populace had shaken off all regard to their former masters, and being headed by the most audacious and criminal of their associates, who assumed the feigned names of Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, Hob Carter, and Tom Miller, by which they were fond of denoting their mean origin, they committed everywhere the most outrageous violence on such of the gentry and nobility as had the misfortune to fall into their hands." The Kent rebels assembled in a vast multitude on Blackheath, from whence they sent a message to the young king requesting an interview. The Essex men in the mean time mustered in thousands, and marching upwards, swarming through Romford and Stratford, took a position on the opposite side of the river to second the demands. The king acceded to the proposed conference, but as he approached the mob he became alarmed at the signs of insolence amongst them, and hastily returned to the Tower. The Kentish peasants, enraged at this, rushed into the metropolis and committed the most horrible excesses. Amongst those who perished was Richard Lyon, the owner of Liston Hall manor, at Gosfield, a famous wine merchant and lapidary, who was one of the Sheriffs of London in 1374. He had been in former days the master of Wat Tyler, and in gratitude for old favours the rebel leader seized and beheaded him. While the Kent rebels thus devastated the city, the

insurgent serfs of Essex appear to have lain quietly at Mile-end. The king, with the queen mother and a party of nobles, met them there, and listened to their demands. It is a proof of the moderation of these men that at a time when they must have thought themselves irresistible, they asked only for the abolition of slavery, freedom to buy and sell in all market towns, a fixed rent instead of the services of villeinage, and a general pardon. The sovereign granted their requests; the mob dispersed; and the following proclamation appeared:—

“Richard &c. Know ye that of our special grace, we have manumitted or set free all and singular our liege subjects, and others of the county of Essex, and them and every one of them from all bondage, do release and acquit by these presents. And also we pardon to our said liegemen and subjects all manner of felonies, treason, transgressions, and extortions by them, or any of them, in any manner whatsoever, done or committed, by riding about, going through divers places, with men-at-arms, archers, and others, with armed force, flags, and pennons flying. Witness ourself at London, the 15th of June, and the fourth year of our reign.”

Having rid himself of one body of the rioters, the king turned with the same soothing mien to the other division in the city. The result of his interview with Wat Tyler and his band in Smithfield is well known. The rebel leader was struck down by the city mace, wielded by the hand of Walworth, the Lord Mayor; but the young king adroitly extricated himself from the consequences of this act, cajoled the rioters out of the city, and dispersed them with the promise that they should participate in all the privileges of the charter of enfranchisement he had just granted to the Essex men. While this was proceeding in London fearful atrocities were committed by straggling bands of the seditious in various parts of the county. Colchester had caught the taint, and some excesses were committed in that district. Sir John Cavendish, the Lord of Pentlow, who had been Chief Justice of the King's Bench, was seized by a party of the “revolted clowns,” as they were called, who were incensed against him because it was his son who killed Wat Tyler, after he had been prostrated in Smithfield. His house was plundered and laid waste, and the judge himself was hurried into Suffolk and beheaded. But little resistance was offered to these excesses. Spencer, the celebrated military bishop, who had a seat at Lambourn, mustered a slender force and defeated the rebels in Norfolk. The arm of authority and the spirit of the nobles, however, appear to have been paralyzed by the sudden audacity of those who had been regarded as part and parcel of their estates; and for weeks the county lay in this state of anarchy, with society turned upside down, peasants dictating to kings, and the barons trembling at the footsteps of the serfs. Vengeance, however, was not far off. The king called a

parliament and laid before it the letters of enfranchisement, observing, "It is for you to decide whether the peasants shall enjoy the rights of freemen or not." "God preserve us!" responded the barons, "from subscribing to such charters, though we were all to perish in one day." They backed their bold words by a rally of their retainers, and the king soon found himself at the head of an army of forty thousand men. A part of this force, headed by the king, marched into Essex, to thrust the serfs back into slavery, and took up a position at Waltham. The disaffected, on their side, mustered in vast force at Billericay, where they unanimously resolved to retain their half fledged freedom, or die in the conflict. A distracted and undisciplined mob, however, was no match for mailed knights and men-at-arms; and when the king's force came up they were surrounded, smitten down, and scattered in all directions. Some sought shelter in the surrounding woods; and old Norsey, which has so often since then echoed the music of the fox-hound, was surrounded by the armed horsemen, and disturbed by the cry of the overtaken fugitive. A remnant fled to Colchester; but the discreet burgesses and former abettors there would have nought to do with them, and they were either captured or killed. Chelmsford, as a consequence of these disturbances, was honoured with a royal visit. The king, with a large part of his force, took up his quarters in the town—the ancient palace of Writtle probably affording accommodation to the monarch and his court—and proceeded to hold an assize of blood. The first act was to call in the letters of enfranchisement, entire villages being menaced with wholesale military execution if they withheld them; and these were burnt in presence of the people. A proclamation was issued commanding that all freemen and knaves should, as heretofore, perform all the works and services which they owed to their lords, according to ancient custom, and should not be allowed any right or privilege they did not enjoy before the insurrection, "inasmuch," it was said, "as the letters of enfranchisement issued from our court without mature consideration, and seeing that the granting of them tended to the great prejudice of us and our crown, and of the prelates, lords, and barons of our kingdom, and of the most holy church." The pardons were revoked; and those who had taken the lead in the insurrection were seized, condemned, and executed, some with form of law, but many others without. A court was opened at Chelmsford for the trial of the offenders; and it is stated that 500 persons who repaired to that town and threw themselves at the king's feet obtained pardon; but the county wore the aspect of a common slaughter-

house. Cruelties of the most horrible description were accompaniments of the executions. Men were half strangled at one corner of a street, and then taken to be hanged at another. In this way some were "hanged four times at the corners of towns." Others had their bowels cut out and burnt while yet alive. These were the terrors and atrocities by which the spirit of that day sought to crush the freedom which every peasant in the land now enjoys without being conscious of its value, or the price set upon it in former days,—the right to choose his own master, and sell his labour where he likes,—to rise, if he can, in the social scale, without being held in menial bondage, and disposed of as a chattel to the next possessor of the soil on which he happens to be born.

In the remainder of the troubled reign of the second Richard we find an Essex man acting a prominent part. Robert de Vere, the young and dissolute Earl of Oxford, who had left Hedingham Castle for the court, became the unbounded favourite of the king, and, as a consequence, the marked victim of one of those factions which by turns domineered over the throne or crouched in meek submission at its foot. He was created Marquis of Dublin, then Duke of Ireland, with the entire sovereignty over that island for life; and access to the sovereign could only be obtained through him. When the king stooped to the storm against court favouritism, which bore down the Lord Chancellor Suffolk, he escaped; but afterwards, having levied a force in Cheshire to relieve the monarch from the degrading thralldom in which the nobles held him, he was routed, and fled to the Low Countries, where he perished in exile. His estates in this county, however, do not appear to have been touched by his enemies.

A tragedy, the first scene of which was enacted in the castle of Plesby, has for ever left the stamp of meanness and treachery upon the character of Richard II. In the month of September, 1397, the Duke of Gloucester, whose stirring life and vast political power render his name conspicuous in the annals of that monarch's reign, had sought repose from the duties of High Constable of England, and from the clamours of a court, in which his haughty adherence to his own judgment and his blunt and honest indisposition to submit to royal despotism had made him hated and feared by the sovereign and the sycophants who fawned around and fed his vices. The duke was, however, the popular favourite of the day, and his enemies durst not openly assail him. They could neither sap him by calumny, nor compass his destruction under the cover of the laws. They determined, therefore, upon private assassination. The

murderers met in council at the palace of Havering-atte-Bower; and the seizure of the duke having been decided upon, the king consented to act the part of a decoy, to draw his uncle from the retreat of Pleshy and the protection of his own retainers. The monarch accordingly proceeded on this policeman's errand from the Bower to the Castle. He greeted the duke in the most friendly terms; supped with him; and then, with apparent obsequious submission to his political experience and mature judgment, urged that he should proceed with him to London that night, to afford him counsel on an important affair of state on the morrow. The duke, suspecting no harm, assented. The victim and his royal nephew rode towards London by Ongar and Epping forest, avoiding the great road and especially Brentwood, which had not acquired a very peaceful character in the late disturbances. The monarch chatted familiarly by the way, till they reached the forest at Stratford. Here he suddenly started forward; and the Earl Marshal and a troop of horsemen, who had been placed in ambush, seized the duke, hurried him on board a vessel in the Thames, and carried him to Calais, where he was smothered by a band of ruffians employed for the purpose by the order of the king. Pleshy Castle was seized by the Crown, and the family of the murdered duke pitilessly expelled from its halls; but in the rivalry of another reign the manner of the murder was established before the country, and the widow was restored to the inheritance. The mob, too, took some vengeance for the death of their favourite. Leland tells us that Sir John Holland, Duke of Exeter, half brother of the king, "was taken in East Sax, at a mylle by Pritelwell, by the communes of the county, and then lead to Plaishey, and there, in vengence for arresting the good Duke of Gloster by King Richard, byheded."

Passing on through several reigns, we find no peculiar event connected with Essex. Serfdom was still sternly maintained within its borders. The man who was born a hind remained a hind for life. So jealous was power of the spirit of enterprize which led the common people to efforts to improve their condition, that legislative measures were passed to repress it. The 7th of Henry IV. prohibited a man from binding his son apprentice to any trade if he did not possess 20s. a year in land—a goodly sum in those days, when the arable land of Essex could be hired at 3d. per acre.

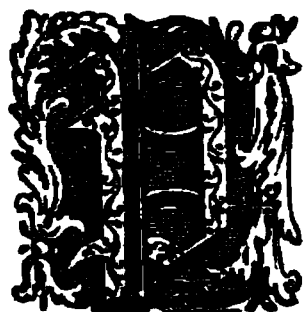
The county was no doubt torn at this period by the troubles of the times, and excited by the new doctrines of the reformation, which had been preached by Wickliffe from Oxford. The monkish writers tell us that in Richard the Second's time (the

closing years of the 14th century) one half the kingdom was infected by those principles; and in the reign of Henry V. an act against the Lollards inaugurated those persecutions for conscience sake which extended almost down to our own time. In the reign of the same monarch, the Essex militia was formed somewhat after its present model. The military part of the feudal system had crumbled away. On the occasion, therefore, of a war with France in 1415, commissioners were sent into each county, to enrol all the freemen able to bear arms, to divide them into companies, and to keep them ready for action against an enemy. Colchester and other towns were likewise called upon by the commission of array to put themselves in a posture of defence.

When the impostor, Jack Cade, raised the standard of revolt of the common people, the Essex men of this class, stirred by traditions of the movement of nearly a century before, which had no doubt lingered in exaggerated tales about their homely hearths, and forgetful of the fearful punishment which followed, assembled again in large numbers at Mile-end. The outrages in the metropolis, however, seem to have been principally committed by the Kentish rioters. When Cade had been defeated and driven out, the Essex seditionists withdrew the moral support they had given him, and hastened back to servitude. Great dependence, it is stated, was placed in these movements on the disposition of the inhabitants of this county, who were ready to join in any popular tumult—a character which, with the growing sense of the advantages of law and order, and full knowledge of the power of the platform and the petition in securing public rights, they have happily lost at the present day.

## CHAPTER X.

THE PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE IN THE COUNTY AND  
BOROUGH—ESSEX IN THE WARS OF YORK AND LAN-  
CASTER—SUFFERINGS OF THE DE VERES—VISIT OF HENRY  
VII. TO HEDINGHAM CASTLE—RUINOUS STATE OF THE  
TOWNS—MANUFACTURES IN ESSEX.



PARLIAMENT had now begun to assume a constitutional shape and substantial power; and at this early date we find a reform bill introduced to the legislature and adopted. This measure did not, however, extend the franchise—it abridged and limited it to the 40s. freeholders of the county, who have ever since continued to enjoy



it. Prior to this a system of universal suffrage had prevailed, so far as the freemen were concerned. The electors had grown tumultuous and unmanageable. An act of Henry VI. recites that the elections in many counties in England "had been by outrages and excessive numbers of people, many of them of small substance and value, yet pretending to a right equal to the best knights and esquires," whereby manslaughter and other mishaps occurred. The right of election was, therefore, limited to those who possessed 40s. a year in land free from all burdens within the county—which made them men of substance in those days—this sum being equal to £20 a year of our present money.\* The good old-fashioned tory historian, jealous of the right of voting, adds—"It were to be wished that the spirit as well as the letter of this law had been maintained." For 150 years before this Essex had sent knights to the House of Commons, which it is universally agreed assumed its elective form in the reign of Henry III. The first members from this county on record were John le Breton and John Filiol, who were returned to the Parliament of Edward I. (1290) held at Westminster. From that period down to our own time the members follow in regular succession. Occasionally only one appears upon the roll, sometimes three or four; but this, perhaps, may arise from the members sent from some of the towns being confused and classed with them. It is certain that Chelmsford, at least on one occasion, sent a member, but it is believed to have petitioned to be relieved from the burden, as the M.P. was not then content with the barren honour, and his constituents had to provide him a substantial stipend. Bradfield, Rayleigh, and Thaxted are also described as boroughs, and may have sent representatives to the national council. Colchester elected its members from the same period as the county, viz., 1290, and the first who appear upon the roll are Elias Fitz-John and Hubert de Colchester. In looking through the roll we find Sir Isaac Rebow was one of the representatives in the reigns of William and Mary, of Anne, and of Geo. I.; he was associated in the last instance with another name still well-known to us,—Richard Du Cane, Esq. The name of Rebow is often found at later periods. Robert Walker and R. Symnell, gent. took wages from the town in the 39th and 43rd of Elizabeth, and appear to be the last who received pay for their legislative duties. Henry V. disfranchised the borough for three years, or,

\* The following were the prices of provisions and labour at this period, as extracted from old bills of charges :—"For 21 lambs, 4s.; for two sawyers, working 10 days, 4d. the day, 6s. 8d.; for 20 pullets, 1s. 8d.; for a quarter of an ox to salt, 1s. 4d.; for 12 pounds of raisins, 1s. 1d.; for one man ploughing and harrowing 12 days, 1s."

in other words, "exempted it from sending members to Parliament" for that period, as an act of special favour, on account of the great expense the inhabitants had been at in repairing their wall. By a strange reversal of circumstances, that which would now be considered a mark of degradation was then an act of grace. Maldon made its first returns in the reign of Edward III.; and in the time of Edward VI. when the abridgement of the franchise, to which we have referred, took place, we find Johannes Tyrell was one of the members—the name of Tyrell frequently appearing in the county representation from the 28th of Edward III., so that it was as familiar to the electors five centuries ago as it has been within the last 25 years. Harwich made one return in the 13th of Edward II. (1343), but it does not seem to have been very proud of the privilege—perhaps it was not found so productive as in modern times—as there was a complete suspension of its exercise till the reign of James I. There is one fact that would dazzle the eye and gladden the heart of the advocate of annual Parliaments in looking over these musty rolls. The members for the county and boroughs were elected for only one session, so that sometimes we find two elections in the year—a circumstance that would almost tempt him to turn conservative and stand upon ancient precedent.

In the frightful struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster—the Wars of the Roses as they are fancifully known in history—sad havoc was made with the landed property in Essex, and many of the great families which owned it were shaken to their foundations. In those wars, extending over a period of thirty years, eighty princes of the royal blood perished; and the contest was as fatal to the ancient nobility of England as the old revolution of 1793 was to that of France. The nobles of the land were nearly exterminated; the difference in the two cases being that in England they did not fall victims to the mad passions of a wild mob, but perished from the ferocious revenge of each other, as either party predominated in the battle-field or the state. In Essex the cause of York appears to have been hotly taken up by the people, who had been previously worked upon by the partizans of the opposing houses, they having now grown into so much importance that "it was necessary to reconcile them to the change." Their great leaders on this side were the Bouchiers and the Lord Fitzwalter, whose large possessions gave them great influence in the county. The latter had a noble mansion, or rather castle, at Woodham Ferris, of the foundations of which some remnants exist about half a mile from the church; and from hence,



when the court intrigues had ripened into war, he went forth with his retainers to the battle of St. Albans to uphold the claim of Richard to the crown. The towns seem to have taken the same side. Colchester was clearly Yorkist, as appears by the inflictions and favours by which it was visited during the contest. The severity which the Lancastrians exercised during a temporary gleam of sunshine upon their fortunes towards Sir Thomas Cook, an Essex gentleman of high repute, appears to have had some influence in fixing the popular feeling against the court. Sir Thomas, a rich city man, who was then building the noble mansion of Gidea Hall, near Romford, having refused a loan to a person named Hawkins, which he alleged was intended for the queen's use, was seized and committed to the Tower on the charge of high treason. He was acquitted on his trial; but his house was plundered, and he was retained in custody on the pretence that he was guilty of misprision, till £8,000 had been squeezed out of him for the use of the king. On the other side the Lancastrians had their adherents in the county. The mighty house of De Vere of Hedingham, described as the most ancient and illustrious in the world, espoused the cause of that party, and adhered to it through poverty and death, as the varying fortunes of the two houses rose and fell, with fidelity that must ever command admiration. As the fortunes of the contending houses were alternately in the ascendant these opposing county families were elevated to the highest wealth and honours, or plunged into abject misery. Restoration followed rapidly upon the heels of murder, outlawry, and confiscation. When Henry VI. was in the ascendant he stripped Colchester, as a punishment for its seditious feeling, of the most valuable right of the fishery, which it has been seen it had been compelled to defend by force of arms, and conferred it upon De Vere. On the contrary, when Edward IV. was proclaimed king in London, and large numbers flocked from Essex to swell the popular shout which acknowledged him sovereign, that monarch made recompence to the borough for its sufferings by restoring the right, and granting it the fullest charter ever before conceded to it; a favour which the burgesses acknowledged by not allowing any person to remain in the town forty days without swearing fealty to him. The De Veres appear to have suffered from the first attainders, and other measures of severity which Edward directed against his opponents; but when the king had placed his throne in peril by making Warwick his enemy, John De Vere and his son appeared on the bloody field of Towten, where 86,776 English-

men slew each other in a quarrel about the colour of a rose,—for, looking to the merits and measures of the contending kings, it made little difference to the nation which ruled it. Such is the view often to be taken of political contests when the passions of the moment have departed. De Vere and his son were captured, and according to the practice of the day, were beheaded after the battle. The family, too, was expelled from the rich halls of Hedingham which they had occupied since the Conquest; stripped of the stewardship of the forest, and driven from the manors of Radwinter, Canfield, Margaret Roothing, and the numberless other lordships which these barons held—in fact from every acre of land in the county. It is recorded that the countess, who had been the associate of queens and the hostess of the noblest in England, was compelled to sit like a common sempstress of the present day—

“Work, work, work,  
Till the eyes grew weary and dim,”

being reduced to such a state of distress that she was compelled to ply the needle for her daily bread. These cruel oppressions of the family were, however, afterwards reversed. John, the second son, as a sop to reconcile him to the ruling powers, was restored to the honours and estates, and Hedingham Castle echoed with the welcome back to a De Vere. The bribe did not, however, obliterate the remembrance of his father's death and the countess's degradation. He was found amongst the mailed warriors who stood up for Lancaster at the battle of Barnet, and with fierceness and valour, inspired by a feeling of revenge which appeared to render him irresistible, he routed the right wing of the Yorkists on that day; but in the *mélée* his men were mistaken for enemies, and attacked by their friends. The earl cried treason, and fled, and victory fell through this mistake to York. He was soon after made a prisoner, but instead of being delivered over to the headsman, to whose hands captive nobles were usually consigned, he was sent to the Castle of Hammes, in Picardy. For twelve long years the imprisoned knight lingered there, but at length obtained his freedom in the style of accredited romance. Either his fine person, his persuasive powers, or his woe, touched the heart of his jailer's wife, and, as in other instances, massive bars and huge bolts, which had defied the strong arm of the stalwart warrior, were broken and forced back by womanly ingenuity, and the earl escaped. In the mean time great changes had been made by violent measures and political subserviency in the property of the county. Gloucester, having seized the throne on the death of his brother and the murder of his children, heaped the spoils

of the land upon those who had promoted his ambition or pandered to his crimes. The Duke of Buckingham, as one who had been most useful to the usurper, received sixteen lordships in this county, including those of Walden, High Easter, Pleshey, Writtle, Waltham, Great Baddow, Boyton Hall, and others. Favourites were, as usual, pensioned off, and tools compensated for their dirty work from the forfeitures of attainted and fugitive nobles. When, therefore, De Vere returned from his prison house, he found others feeding upon his patrimony. But he knew how to win it back again by his sword. On the day of retribution at Bosworth (August 22, 1485), he led the archers and commanded the van of Richmond's army, and when Richard III. fell "by a fate too mild and honourable for his multiplied and detestable enormities," and Henry VII. was crowned upon the field of battle, the fortunes of the De Veres were again in the ascendant. The earl was restored to all his honours and estates, appointed governor of the Tower, and, says the historian, "he lived at Hedingham Castle in great splendour and hospitality." As a matter of course, confiscation and ruin fell upon the adherents of Richard. Amongst those who suffered under the act of attainder was Sir Richard Charlton, who was stripped of the manor of Riffhams, in Little Baddow, Rockholt, at Leyton, and Chobham, at West Ham; these spoils falling to Sir John Risley, as a reward for the services rendered to Henry's cause.

An incident in connexion with the family of De Vere soon after occurred, which illustrates the jealousy of power and the gratitude of kings in those days. The monarch visited Essex, and tarried for a time at Hedingham Castle, to partake of the hospitality of the man who had so long suffered and so nobly fought for the cause of Lancaster, now triumphant. Right royally was he entertained. Meanly and oppressively was the host requited. On the departure of the sovereign from the castle, the servants and retainers of the earl assembled, some to do honour to the chief, others to indulge the natural desire of gazing upon royalty; and dressed in rich liveries they lined the pathway from the portals. "My lord," said the king, turning to the earl, "I have heard much of your hospitality, but I see it is greater than the speech. These handsome gentlemen and yeomen I see on both sides of me are surely your menial servants?" The earl replied, they were mostly his retainers, come to do him service on this state occasion, and chiefly to see his grace. The king started. "By my faith, my lord," responded he, "I thank you for your good cheer, but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight

(alluding to an act limiting the number of a baron's retainers). My attorney must speak with you,"—and the hospitality of Hedingham Castle was rewarded by wringing from the earl a fine of 15,000 marks (equal to £10,000), for the holiday parade of the very men who, in the line of battle on the field of Bosworth, had assisted in making Richmond a king. Even this, however, did not shake the loyalty of the earl, who retained command in the army of his sovereign, and did good service in upholding his authority in the battle with the Cornish rebels at Blackheath.

Essex was not altogether free from the rebellions that disturbed the early part of this monarch's reign. Lord Lovell and others, who had refused to accept the general pardon, fled to Colchester, and there found an asylum for nearly a year. When the court proceeded to the North, these malcontents sallied forth, and marched at the head of 8,000 men in the hope of surprising the king at York. This mad scheme was frustrated, and some of the conspirators were executed. Lord Lovell escaped, but appeared in arms in support of the impostor Simnel, who was set up to personate the Earl of Warwick. It was believed he fell, undistinguished amongst the flying fugitives at the lost battle of Stoke, and his name being attainted, the estates at Little Waltham were granted by Henry to swell the fortunes of the lord of Hedingham. The Lord Fitzwalter, too, embarked in another attempt equally foolish and abortive. He took part with those who set up a pseudo son of York, and lost by it a head which ought to have guided him with more discretion. His family were stripped of their estates at Burnham, Ulting, and Little Dunmow, and expelled from their noble home at Woodham Walter. The title and estates were, however, afterwards restored to Robert Ratcliffe, who had married an heiress of the house, and the Fitzwalters dwelt there long after in a style of splendour which entitled them to entertain royalty itself, Queen Anne Boleyn having been often a guest at Woodham Castle, and Elizabeth sought shelter there when menaced by her enemies.

An illustration of the extent to which the wars of York and Lancaster had desolated the country is to be found in the legislation of that period. An act was passed which sets forth that various towns, amongst them Colchester and Maldon are named, were in a state of decay and dilapidation. The statute goes on to draw the following picture of them and to provide a remedy:—"Whereas in times past there had been many beautiful houses within the walls and liberties, they had now fallen down and decayed, and at this time remain un-reedi-

fied as desolate and vacant grounds, many of them high and adjoining the High Streets, replenished with much uncleanness and filth, with pits, cellars, and vaults lying open and uncovered, to the great peril of the king's subjects, and other houses were in danger of falling down. Now, if the owners of the waste grounds on which houses had stood 25 years waste, and of the decayed houses, do not in three years time rebuild them, then the lord of whom the ground is held may re-enter and seize the same." The act does not appear to have been altogether effective for its purpose, as other statutes with the same object of raising these towns from their ruins were afterwards passed, one in 1544, in which Maldon is again specially named as still conspicuous for its uncleanness and crumbling walls.

Commerce at this period was fast bound in fetters. Wheat, for instance, grown in Essex could not be carried for sale or consumption into Suffolk or Herts. In the 18th of Henry VII., however, an act passed to allow the collector of customs to grant a license for conveying it from one county to another. The exports from Essex had, under these circumstances, been very limited. The oysters from its coast had been celebrated from early ages. They were considered a great luxury in Rome, notwithstanding the length of the voyage. Ordinary manufactures, however, had made little way here. The production of woollen cloths began to extend about the time of the Crusades; but in a return, made long after, of the duty on dyeing wool, it is found that while Kent and Sussex paid £108. 13s. 3d., Essex paid only £4. 2s. 4d. Still it was recognised in a royal letter as a manufacturing county; and its character for honesty stood high. In an act against tacking cloths, by which the makers of Somerset, Dorset, and other places cheated their customers by putting inferior parts inside, it was enacted "that all cloths should be sold fairly and openly without tacks, as was done in Essex." That the county did not take a leading position in this branch of industry was not, perhaps, owing to want of energy in the inhabitants. The charters granted in connection with commercial matters tended to foster certain manufactures in particular districts; and though these charters are now regarded as mischievous monopolies, they were eminently useful in those times, as the people were thus enabled to enter on enlarged enterprise, and freedom grew as trade was strengthened. Greater facility of traffic, it appears by the before-named act, began to be introduced. A law, too, was passed in this reign, (Henry VII.) which has since had a great effect upon landed property in this county, in common with the rest of the kingdom. By this enactment, the nobility

obtained the power of breaking ancient entails, and alienating their estates, through which in time the massive fortunes of the great barons were divided and scattered, and portions of them brought within reach of the middle classes. Thus the land came more into the hands of men like our county squires, placed near enough to those now designated the people to sympathize and co-operate with them, yet enabled by their wealth to resist any undue stretch of power, and living amongst and caring for those classes who, either by the labouring arm, or by skill and capital, draw sustenance from their soil.

## CHAPTER XI.

**HENRY VIII. IN ESSEX—RESIDENCE AT NEW HALL—CONNECTION OF ANNE BOLEYN WITH ESSEX—HER MARRIAGE TO THE KING—THE REFORMATION, AND SUPPRESSION OF THE MONASTERIES IN ESSEX.**



**E**SSEX was a favourite county of the bluff and strong-willed Henry VIII.; and roofs are still standing beneath which he sheltered his mistresses and feasted with the gallants of his court. Hither he often retired, not only to indulge his illicit pleasures and rural tastes, but no doubt to brood over those stern measures by which, in the latter half of his reign, he succeeded in breaking down and revolutionizing the long settled religious feelings of a whole people. This monarch was not content with the hunting palace of Chigwell, and the shaded bowers of Havering; but in this reign Chelmsford was surrounded with royal residences. The old priory house at Blackmore, from which the Augustine canons had been expelled, and their spoils divided amongst the royal favourites, is said to have been a place to which he secretly retired to bury the troubles of a crown in the soft oblivion of lascivious pleasures. No court circular recorded his movements on these occasions; none but his confidantes knew whither he had fled; but when missed from the usual palace board, scandal whispered that he had gone to Jericho—a name which the mansion still bears as a popular designation. Here dwelt at least one of his mistresses—Elizabeth Tailbois, the widow of Sir Gilbert, and daughter of Sir John Blount; and one of the natural sons of the monarch, whom he afterwards created Duke of Richmond and Somerset, and made a knight of the garter, was born in this stealthy retirement. The venerable mansion of Newland Hall, in Roxwell, which the traveller sees on the



left hand side of the road, as he passes from Boyton Cross to Margaret Roothing, a possession of King Harold before the conquest, is marked by history as another of these characteristic retreats. Shenfield, in the parish of Margaretting, is also said to have sheltered another of the frail beauties who ministered to the passions of the king. It was then a stately mansion, its buildings extending far around, with its two strong watch-towers, its chapel, its moat, and its drawbridge; but the plough has long since passed over the pleasure grounds and gardens where the monarch wandered in soft converse; the old manor house had disappeared at the beginning of the present century; and the neat modern mansion of Mr. George Straight, it is believed, now stands, though on higher ground, not far from its site. Terling Place, again, the pleasant mansion of the present Lord Rayleigh, had caught the royal eye, which had a taste for a fair landscape as well as a fair face; and attracted by the picturesque woodlands and the winding Ter, the king often made it a place of temporary sojourn. It had been a palace of the bishops of Norwich, who had a park there some centuries before, and the king, having given the property to his Lord Chancellor, with liberty to restore or extend this park, was probably an occasional inhabitant of Terling Place in the character of his guest. It is clear it was not like those before noticed, a place of stealthy trips and guilty concealment, as some of the acts of this monarch's reign are openly dated from Terling Place.

New Hall, Boreham, however, was the most remarkable residence of Henry VIII. in Essex, both from its own splendour and the historical connexion it has with the brilliant life and bloody death of the fair Anne Boleyn, who, from the possessions of her family, and her own abode at Rochford Hall and elsewhere, may be considered a daughter of this county. The stately mansion, with its walls and towers about it, is believed to have been at that time nearly the largest in the kingdom. What now remains is a mere fragment—one turret, it is stated, of the original structure. It was the property of Sir Thomas Boleyn, afterwards Earl of Wiltshire, father of the Lady Anne; and Henry considered the estate as beautiful as the daughter. He cast a coveting eye upon it, and, having obtained it by exchange, greatly beautified and improved it, giving it the name of Beaulieu—"a fair place"—but the new title never appears to have been adopted by the people. He erected also a magnificent gateway in one of the courts, which, in adapting the building to the limits of modern convenience, has been demolished; but the arms which surmounted it have been placed over the door of the grand

entrance. The crown is beautifully sculptured in free stone, having a dragon and a greyhound, with crowns on their heads, as supporters; and beneath, sustained by a lion and a hawk, is the following inscription—"Henricus Rex Octavus, Rex inclit armis, Magnanimus Struxit hoc opus Egregium"—in English—"The magnanimous Henry the Eighth, a king renowned in arms, erected this sumptuous building." The ground of this exquisite work of art is a delicate foliage, and the whole is enclosed in a frame of stone, the outer edge embellished with warlike instruments and military trophies. The grand hall is a noble apartment—"the noblest," it has been said, "in the kingdom, and upon the entrance of it the beholder is struck with its amazing grandeur." It is nearly forty feet high, ninety in length, and fifty in width. Here the king kept the feast of St. George with his court and nobles in 1524. It is a singular illustration of the changes of property, and the shifting of circumstances, that the palace home of the king who first had the daring to set his stern heel upon the Church of Rome, and crushed its then dominant power, is now inhabited by a community of nuns of the order of the Holy Sepulchre; and the banquet hall of Henry VIII., where the light laugh so often echoed, and the wine cup passed, is a Roman Catholic Chapel, where the mass is daily celebrated, and the religious chants of the veiled devotees may be heard at matin dawn and vesper time.

While the king was the petted champion of Rome, his queen, Catherine of Arragon, made a journey through this county with a grand pilgrim party, proceeding on a visit to the image of the Virgin, at Walsingham, then of great repute; on which occasion the corporation of Colchester met her at Lexden, presented her with a purse of £40, and when on the following day she departed from St. John's Abbey, they escorted her to the boundaries of Mile End.

It is not within our scope to examine the motives and moving springs which led the king to break from the Church of Rome. Neither is it necessary to detail the circumstances which had placed Pope Clement under the power and pressure of the Emperor Charles, who had his own political objects in obstructing the consummation of Henry's divorce from Catherine. Those circumstances, the personal irritation and frailties of the king, had no doubt a great share in bringing about the reformation; but our province is the stupendous change produced in the property, the feeling, and religion of the county by that event. Giving the king credit for the scruples which he pleaded in respect to his marriage with Catherine, it is clear that the



decaying beauty and the disease of the queen increased his horror at the crime he had committed ; and when—

“ Gospel light first beamed from Boleyn's eyes,”

he was maddened by the opposition offered to his desires, and the check put upon his hitherto unrestrained will. This led him to examine and expose the abuses which Pope Adrian himself had frankly admitted existed in the church ; and finding that the awe with which the people had been accustomed to regard this mighty structure had been weakened by the teaching of the Lollards, and shaken by the sound of Luther's voice, which, after rousing the continent, had reached even this country, he was led to question the ecclesiastical authority of which he had before been the champion. The private marriage with Anne Boleyn, on the 14th of November, 1532, completed the breach, and cut this country adrift from the see of Rome, by the almost insurmountable difficulties it interposed in the way of reconciliation. That fair and beautiful human flower, as has been seen, had sprung from the Essex soil. Her father took one of his titles from the old mansion of Rochford Hall ; and there are still dim and shadowy traditions floating amongst the common people of that neighbourhood as to the connexion of that building with passages in the life of the unhappy queen, but they are most of them in opposition to the statements of authentic history. Anne was early transported to France, whither she went in attendance on the king's sister, who married Lewis XII. ; and when in the full ripeness of young womanhood she appeared at the English court, she at once excited the passions of the susceptible king, who, finding her virtue was unassailable, formed the resolution of raising her to the throne. Honours and employments were heaped upon her father, who was made treasurer of the household, lord privy seal, a knight of the garter, and created Viscount Rochford and Earl of Wiltshire. The lady Anne, too, with ambition as great as her beauty, exerted all her powers to maintain the influence she had acquired over the king, and clear out of her path those who opposed her passage to the throne. She had passed some time in the court of the Duchess of Alençon, who was favourable to the Lutheran reformers. There she had doubtless imbibed the new doctrines ; and these, preached to him by loving lips, had no slight influence upon the actions of the king. The fair reformer, it is well known, succeeded, passing over the shattered fortunes of the fallen Wolsey, to the throne ; and the rejected Catherine being pensioned off under the title of Princess Dowager of Wales, Essex furnished various manors as part of the provision for her, including

those of Great Baddow, Waltham Bury, and Great Leighs. We need not travel over the monstrous pretences and accusations of inconstancy by which royal brutality brought the fair Boleyn to the block, and at the same time sent an Essex man, Lord Viscount Rochford, her brother, headless to the grave. Tradition says, that the queen was at one time confined in the tower of a house called Green-street, in West Ham; and the same authority adds, the king retired to High Beech, near Epping, during the execution, that he might be so far off that it would be impossible for him, in a weak moment of returning love and mercy, to stay the blow that was to strike off that beauteous head, but still near enough to hear the Tower guns announce that the axe had fallen and the bloody tragedy had closed.

While the reformation remained incomplete, and the king and the court hovered between the old system and the new, there was a disposition in Essex, as elsewhere, to run into extravagant notions and wild extremes. With faith loosened from its ancient holdfast, and the anchorage of scripture as yet unprovided, almost everyone, we are informed, "considered himself at liberty to frame opinions and a form of worship conformable to the dictates of his conscience, or as frequently, perhaps, of his imagination;" and in Colchester and other towns of the county, men went about turning "the knowledge of God's testimonies to vain and contentious jangling." The work, however, still went on; and at length came the measure which effected so vast a revolution in a mass of property in this county—the suppression of the monasteries, upon the ruins of which so many noble families have been built up. One of the most useful assistants in effecting this suppression was Sir Richard Rich, a man well trained in the law, who resided at the priory at Little Leighs, and converted it into a mansion so superb, that it was described at the time as "a secular elysium, a worldly paradise, a heaven upon earth, if there be any such"—though of all its splendour a mere fragment only now remains to mark its site. Though so active in demolishing these strongholds of the assailed faith, Sir Richard continued a member of the church of Rome all his life, and, says the historian, in words not very creditable to the character and conscience of the man—"his zeal in that undertaking may easily be accounted for, by the immense share of plunder of these houses which fell to his lot." Some of these institutions were almost coeval with the conversion of the Saxons to christianity. The abbey of Barking was founded in 666, being the second in the kingdom; that people gave many lordships in the county to religious

houses as offerings of piety and expiations for crime ; they had thus continued to multiply and increase in wealth from age to age, till they had studded the county in all directions, and locked up much of the land in mortmain. There were no fewer than forty-seven of these religious houses in Essex, many of which possessed noble estates. Two of these were mitred abbeys—that is, abbeys whose chiefs sat in parliament and ranked with the high ecclesiastics and nobles of the land ; viz. Waltham Holy Cross, and St. John's at Colchester. The following is a list of the other houses, the history of which, with all the particulars of them that can be gleaned from their records and ruins, will appear in the description of the hundreds in which they were situate :—

**COMMON ABBEYS.**—Belcigh, Coggeshall, St. Oeyth, Stratford Langthorn, Tilty, and Saffron Walden.

**PRIORIES.**—Burden, Blackmore, St. Botolph, (Colchester,) Bicknacre, Carmelitea, (Maldon,) Chelmsford, Little Dunmow, Grey Friars, (Colchester,) Karls Colne, Hatfield Broad Oak, Hatfield Peverel, Little Horkesley, Latton, Little Leigha, West Mersey, Panfield, Prittlowell, Stanagate, Takeley, Tiptree, Thoby, and Thremhall.

**NUNNERIES.**—Barking, Castle Hedingham, and Wix.

**COLLEGES.**—Halstead, Pleshey, and Laver Marney.

**PRECEPTORIES OF TEMPLARS.**—Cressing and Maplestead.

**HOSPITALS.**—Bocking, Brook-street, (South Weald,) Crouched Friars, Castle Hedingham, Hornchurch, Great Ilford, Newport, St. Giles', (Maldon,) and St. Mary Magdalen, (Colchester.)

The revenues of these houses at the time of their suppression are stated to have amounted to £7,500—an enormous sum in that age, when wheat was sold at 8s. the quarter, oats at 2s., beans 3s. 4d., a load of hay for 5s., and a hogshead of red wine cost only £1. 6s. 8d.\* Labour was paid in proportion, the chief husbandman on a farm, carter, or shepherd, receiving £1. a year ; a common labourer in husbandry 16s. 8d. ; a woman servant 10s. The lands of these monasteries would now bring in an enormous rental ; it being computed that the whole of the ecclesiastical spoils which thus fell into the hands of the king, bringing in then £161,000 a year, would now realize, at twenty years' purchase, about forty millions sterling.

The suppression of the monasteries was preceded by a

\* Stow, speaking of prices, says—"It was this year enacted that butchers should sell their beef and mutton by weight : beef for a half-penny the pound, and mutton for three farthings, which being devised for the great commodity of the realm (as it was thought) hath proved far otherwise, for at that time (i. e. 1533) fat oxen were sold for XXVIs. VIIId., fat wethers for IIIs. IVd., fat calves for the like price. A fat lamb for XIIId. The butchers of London sold penny pieces of beef for the relief of the poor ; every piece two pound and an half : sometimes 3 pounds for a penny. And 13 and sometimes 14 of those pieces for XIIId. Mutton VIIId. the quarter. And an 100 weight of beef for IVs. VIIId."

visitation for the purpose of collecting evidence to justify the seizure—the lesser houses, that is, those under £200 a year, being first dealt with ; and so black was the bill of indictment the commission presented, so hideous the practices of which they accused the monks and nuns, that Rapin and other historians regard them as raked up and exaggerated to clothe in decent garb the act which had been resolved on. After the visitation persons were sent into Essex and other counties to receive surrenders ; and some of the heads of houses were so terrified by the storm they saw steadily approaching, that they made the best bargain they could for themselves, and resigned their property. Many of them, who had watched the signs of the time, had taken care to lay up a secret store preparatory to anticipated banishment from cell and refectory. All these surrenders were made to run in the voluntary form following—"The abbot and brethren, upon full deliberation, certain knowledge of their own proper motion, for certain just and reasonable causes especially moving them in their souls and consciences, did freely and of their own accord give and grant their houses to the king ;" but though given up in this quiet form, they were, says a writer, "as basely sacked and pillaged, as if they had fell into the hands of a foreign enemy." The voluntary principle, however, was not in favour with all the brethren. Though the doors were thrown open to all who chose to leave, the houses were still filled. The aid of parliament was therefore invoked, and all the lesser monasteries were swept away. When the turn of the larger houses came a few years after, they nearly all of them surrendered to a power they had seen it was useless to resist—the abbot of Tilty being one of the first in the kingdom to submit. One, however, in this county is recorded as having been contumacious. The mitred abbot of St. John's, at Colchester, refused to yield. He stood by his abbey and the Pope, and refused to acknowledge the King's spiritual supremacy. But the king who, when the Commons hesitated in granting him a supply, laid his hand on the head of one of its influential members, and said—"Get my bill passed by to-morrow, or else to-morrow this head of yours shall be off," was not likely to be baffled by a monk. The abbot was forthwith attainted of high treason, and doomed to death. There is a tradition that when the order for his execution came down, on the 1st of Dec., 1539, the Colchester magistrates invited him to a feast, and when he came expecting to share their hospitality, they read the warrant, and then laid hold of and hanged him,—on a gallows, too, which the authorities of the abbey had given the burgesses of the town permission to erect at Greensted. Another victim

was Dr. James Mallett, who had been chaplain to the queen. Unawed by the fierce temper and despotic government of the king, he ventured to express his opinion on these proceedings, and he was hanged at Chelmsford for indulging in the luxury of free speech.

Whatever opinion may be entertained of the practices in these monasteries, and of the system of religion which they upheld, there is no doubt that their suppression was a sad calamity to the poor. They are described by a protestant writer as having answered the purpose of "poor-houses, inns, and hospitals." At their gates the poor of the district were regularly relieved, there being then no union-houses for their reception or rates for their support. Within their walls the traveller found hospitality and lodging; and at the hands of the monks, who usually pretended to some knowledge of physic, the sick received aid. The king, indeed, bound those into whose hands the abbey lands passed, to keep up the olden hospitality of the monasteries; but this was an obligation that was soon very generally disregarded. Their loss, therefore, was in these respects severely felt in the county; and Morant tells us that when the abbey and priory and hospital at Colchester were demolished or left ruinous, the town "underwent a great alteration for the worse," so that many houses were taken down, and the owners of others were prosecuted for allowing them to sink into decay.

The royal promises which had been made with respect to the application of the plunder of the monasteries throughout the kingdom were utterly disregarded. The expectation had been held out, that the king would create forty earls, sixty barons, three thousand knights, and raise and support an army of forty thousand soldiers out of these church revenues, so that neither he nor his successors would have again to ask for loans, or subsidies, or fifteenths from the people. He would create, too, eighteen new bishoprics endowed with £1,000 a year each. He created five, and established a few canons in some of the cathedrals. Numbers of poor vicarages, as we have proof in this county, were left with the most scanty allowances. The whole of the remainder of the vast spoil, which ought to have been applied to objects of benevolence and religion, was either distributed amongst favourites, or squandered away in profuse extravagance and pleasures; yet the king was afterwards driven to borrow money and debase the coin. It is sad that the reformation should owe its origin to such a man; but it was a rough work, and perhaps a no less hard and unscrupulous instrument could have accomplished it.

## CHAPTER XII.

ABOLITION OF THE CHANTRIES AND VISITATION OF THE CHURCHES IN ESSEX—DEARTH AND TUMULTS IN THE COUNTY—LADY JANE GREY—ENTERTAINMENT OF QUEEN MARY AT COLCHESTER—THE ESSEX MARTYRS.



HE rough hand of Henry VIII. halted and hesitated on many subjects connected with the reformation. He lighted up the fires of persecution in defence of points which are now considered as essentially distinguishing the Church of Rome from that of England; and one of his victims in 1531, long after he had set up his own supremacy and trampled down the monasteries, was a youth of Colchester, who perished in a London prison for carrying a bundle of forbidden books. When, too, copies of the new translation of the Bible were placed in some of the principal churches in the county, as we know they were at Chelmsford, Witham, Brentwood, and elsewhere, chained to a desk so that all the people might read, they were enjoined by proclamation to use the privilege moderately, and not "presume to expound doubtful phrases without the advice of the learned." It was not till the next reign, that of Edward VI., that greater freedom was given in these matters, and the Church of England began to be moulded into its present form. Compulsion and persecution were, however, resorted to as instruments in producing uniformity in the new faith, perhaps almost unavoidably so in those days, when so much of political interest and feeling was mingled with religion; and those who obstinately asserted the spiritual supremacy of the Pope—or, in other words, adhered to the old faith—were declared guilty of high treason. "Though the Protestant divines," says Hume, "had ventured to renounce opinions deemed certain during many ages, they regarded in their turn the new system as so certain that they would suffer no contradiction with regard to it, and they were ready to burn, in the same flames from which they themselves had so narrowly escaped, every one who had the assurance to differ from them." A commission was appointed to deal with all contemners of the Book of Common Prayer, without regard to the forms of law or ordinary methods of trial. Under this, a tanner of Colchester, who had flinched from the stake and recanted, was condemned to bear a fagot upon his back publicly at Paul's Cross, and afterwards in his native town—a warning

perhaps to the followers of Christopher Vitels, a joiner, who had made some progress in the neighbourhood as a teacher of the novel doctrines of the "Family of Love." It is a singular fact, too, and in strange contrast with the position of parties at the present day, that amongst the persecuting proceedings of this reign we find that Secretary Petre, the founder of the old Roman Catholic family in this county, was one of the commissioners who interrogated and sentenced Bishop Gardiner, whose real offence was an adherence to the Church of Rome.

The reformers seem to have thought that the best means of purifying the church was to plunder it. On the destruction of the religious houses the ecclesiastical benefices possessed by these establishments, with the tithes annexed to them, had passed into lay hands, and now the Government turned to the churches themselves for further spoil. Essex suffered again from this proceeding. The word went forth in the reign of Edward VI. to abolish the chantries—the gleanings which still remained upon the field after the harvesting of the larger monastic institutions. These were to be found in most of the larger churches of the county. At Chelmsford, for instance, there were four, and that of Joseph Elenor, at Colchester, possessed more than a hundred acres of land. All the small endowments of these special altars, which were generally raised for the celebration of masses for the dead, were seized upon, and altogether brought in a goodly sum. To avoid the charge of rapacity it was decreed that the sums arising from the sale of this property should be appropriated to the establishment of grammar schools, and the maintenance of preachers. This decree, however, was of as little worth as the promise of Henry VIII. in respect to the monasteries. A few of the fragments of these chantry lands were indeed applied to the endowment of grammar schools at about 20 places, including Chelmsford, Bury, and St. Albans; but the great bulk passed into the hands of those who had interest with the court or the commissioners, or went to supply the temporal wants of the public treasury.

Another engine for stripping the ecclesiastical establishment was the visitation of the churches made in this reign. A body of commissioners, including a Roman Catholic, Sir Richard Rich, of Great Leighs, before-mentioned, visited all the churches in the county to ascertain what "coyns, vestments, plate, jewels, and other implements" they were possessed of: and delivering over to the churchwardens barely sufficient for the plain service of the Protestant system, all the remainder of the property found, and the rich paraphernalia, were seized and carried off for the public use. An inventory of what the commissioners found



belonging to the church of Saffron Walden has been preserved, and it will give some idea of the value of the spoil. This includes six chalices weighing together 107 ounces, a cross of 92 ounces, a censer of 50 ounces, a silver cross of 98 ounces, a censer of 88 ounces, a cup of silver and pix with berill stone of 46 ounces, two candlesticks of 36 ounces, a crysmatorie of 18 ounces, two silver cruets of 8 ounces, a ship of silver and a spoon of 8 ounces, a pax of silver of 10 ounces, and vestments without number in satin and cloth of gold. The only things left for divine service by the visitants were one chalice, a cope, a carpet, and cloths for the communion table. An enormous sum was thus obtained by this visitation in Essex alone. It is a matter of deep regret that in the progress of ecclesiastical spoliation, the proceeds should have vanished no one seems to have known whither. Had they been applied to purposes akin to those for which the property was originally given, free schools might have been planted thickly over the land, and every minister decently provided for without the eleemosynary aid of a Queen Anne's Bounty. Ample funds, too, would have been left for the repair of the churches of the county, which, if properly invested, would have prevented the budding and blossoming of those church-rate contests which now produce the periodical fruit of bitterness in almost every parish.

The changes occasioned by the abolition of the monasteries led to tumults in Essex and other parts of the land. The monks had been indulgent landlords; but when the abbey lands came into the hands of lay proprietors they raised the rents and otherwise pressed hard upon the tenantry. Wide parks were enclosed. The friars, who spent their incomes upon the spot, according to old report, fed well upon the fattest produce of the land; and their custom being gone, the soil no longer yielded a profit for its tillage. Whole tracts were, therefore, laid into sheep walks. Want and misery, with their discontent, seasoned probably by a little religious animosity, came upon the poor. Open insurrections broke out in some parts of the kingdom. In 1549 there was a dearth and scarcity in the county. Wheat, which had been at about 8s. a quarter, was so dear that holders were suspected of keeping it back; and an order in council came down to the justices and other gentlemen, and the officers of the boroughs, requiring them to "search the barns, granaries, and houses of farmers and others having corn to sell, and oblige them to bring every market-day such a quantity of grain to market as they could conveniently spare." Twice in that year did tumultuous and excited mobs wander through Essex, demolishing houses, destroying the parks, and



breaking down the enclosures of the gentry. It would seem a few men of some note encouraged this violence, as after its suppression the High Bailiff of Romford was executed at Aldgate, and Mr. Bell, an Essex man, was hanged and quartered at Tyburn.

The only other event of local interest in this reign was the fall of Sir Richard Rich, the Lord Chancellor. When the storm burst on the Protector, Sir Richard, moved by the yearnings of old friendship, endeavoured to save him. Accident betrayed him, and when Somerset went to the block, the man who had so long sailed prosperously through these perilous times, retired to his noble seat at Little Leighs, from which refuge power could never again induce him to stray.

On the death of Edward, the fair thing, and as unfortunate as fair, set up as the puppet queen of a few days to serve the ambition of the Dudleys—Lady Jane Grey—had an intimate connexion with this county, if she was not born within it. The family, with the lordship of Stebbing Hall, and other estates in Essex, had long held possession of the manor of Woodham, and it is probable, we are told, that her father, Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, resided there about the time of her birth. The fatal issue of that abortive attempt to set aside the daughters of Henry VIII. is well known. The Lady Jane, who at the age of seventeen had been dragged reluctantly to the throne, descended from it after ten days to the prison and the block. And here was not the only Essex head that fell in that wild attempt. Sir John Gates, the owner of the manor of Saling, was executed at the same time that the headsman's arm quenched the guilty ambition of Northumberland; Henry Bouchier, Earl of Essex, was stripped of his estates at Aythorp Roothing and elsewhere, as was also the Lord Parr, of Stanstead Hall, at Halstead, for participating in the affair. The father of Lady Jane perished for joining the ill-advised rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt. The whole county, in fact, was prepared to accept Mary as sovereign. Colchester declared energetically in her behalf. The authorities looked to their defences, and put the town in a position to maintain her right against all opponents. The burgesses, too, added hospitality to their martial spirit. Amongst other things, they sent to the queen, who was then at Framlingham, in Suffolk, three tuns of their best old ale, for which, and the carriage thereof, they paid £4. Mary was so pleased with the zeal of the borough, and the flavour of its beer, that she visited the town on the 26th of July, 1558,—from which date it would appear she was then on her way to London—when the corpora-

tion further presented her with a silver cup and £20 in gold. Right royally, too, did they feast her. In the borough chamberlain's account for that year there are charges—"For 38 dozen of bread, 39s. ; for 50 gallons of claret wine, 48s. ; ten barrels of beer ; a quarter of beef, weighing five score and ten pounds, 9s. 2d. ; a side of beef, weighing seven score and five pounds, 12s. 1d. ; a veal 4s. ; half a veal 2s. 4d. ; two muttons 9s. 4d. ;" together with other dainties. It is not certain, however, that all these good things were "set before the queen." A part of them was probably employed in keeping the loyalty of the corporate body up to a comfortable heat.

Notwithstanding this feeling, which was general throughout the country, in favour of the succession of Mary, her religious opinions were no secret to the people. She had adhered steadfastly to the old form and faith, and whatever may be thought of her acts, there can be no doubt of her personal sincerity. When pressed upon the subject in King Edward's time, she declared herself willing to endure death for her religion, and expressed her fear that she was not worthy to suffer martyrdom in such a cause. The chief officers of her household were committed to the Tower for allowing the performance of the ancient service ; and the Lord Chancellor, Sir Anthony Wingfield, and Sir William Petre, proceeding to Copped Hall,\* in Essex, the residence of the princess, announced to her, her chaplains and servants, the royal pleasure. These, after a short demur, promised obedience ; she replied, "Rather than use any other service than was used at the death of the late king, my father, I will lay my head on a block and suffer death. When the king's majesty shall come to such years that he may be able to judge these things himself, his majesty shall find me ready to obey his orders in religion : but now, though he, good sweet king, have more knowledge than any other of his years, yet it is not possible that he can be a judge of these things. If my chaplains do say no mass, I can hear none. They may do therein as they will ; but none of your new service shall be used in my house, or I will not tarry in it." With these strong feelings in the sovereign, backed by subservient parliaments, the waves of the reformation soon began to be rolled back. First the Protestant preachers in the county were silenced ; many ministers were expelled because they had taken to themselves wives, and combined domestic felicity with their sacred office ; and in common with the rest of the kingdom, the mass and the Roman ritual were restored in all the Essex churches ; although,

\* The seat of the late H. J. Conyers, Esq., at Epping.

singularly enough, we find incidental mention made of the chained Bibles remaining in some of them after this period. The full storm of persecution soon after broke fiercely upon the county. Bonner, who was in prison for his adherence to the Catholic cause, was liberated and reinstated in the see of London on the accession of the queen. He retaliated savagely upon the Protestants; and this district, being within his jurisdiction, presents a long and sorrowful list of those who perished in the vain attempt to root out by terror the new doctrines which had struck deeply into the heart of the land. One of the first and most remarkable of these victims was William Hunter, of Brentwood, a youth of nineteen, whose years and deportment so won upon the un pitying bishop that he seems to have been loth to commit him to the flames. Hunter had been apprenticed to a silk weaver in London, which place he left in 1555, however, to avoid the peril and compulsion his religious opinions were likely to bring down upon him, and returned to Brentwood. Pondering one day in the old chapel of his native town on the Bible still remaining there, he was questioned by a townsman, and afterwards, on his report, by the Rev. Thomas Wood, the vicar of South Weald, upon religious matters. Deemed from this ordeal unsound on the doctrine of the real presence in the sacrament, the great test of orthodoxy in those days, he was denounced to one Master Brown, who appears to have taken the post of inquisitor in the neighbourhood, and perceiving the coming storm, he endeavoured to evade it by absenting himself. His father, however, by the menaces of a prison, was made instrumental in his capture; and Master Brown, finding him firm and too expert in the handling of scripture texts for him to cope with, sent him in the custody of Robert Salmon, the constable, to Bonner, in London. The bishop tried all the power of threats, the prison, and the stocks, with all the arts of persuasion, to shake his faith. He even offered to set him up in business in London, or to make him the steward of his own household; but nought could sap the belief of the prisoner or induce him to play the hypocrite, and he was condemned to the flames. On a Saturday night he was brought to Brentwood, and, with others sentenced to the same fearful death, confined at the Swan Inn till the Tuesday. Then he was led forth by the Sheriff, surrounded by a posse with bows and bills and other weapons, and, encouraged by his parents, who gloried in his faith and firmness, "to the town's end, where the butts stood,"—somewhere, it is believed, near the Grammar School and the venerable oak whose aged trunk, with yet a few green leaves above it, has

stood into days when men no longer kill each other for conscience sake. While the pile that was to consume him was being prepared he knelt down on a broom fagot, and read the scriptures, amidst the taunts of "one Master Tyrell, of the Beaches;" and having rejected the offer of life made in a letter from the queen, if he would recant, read to him by the Sheriff, he walked to the stake, to which he was chained by Richard Ponde, a bailiff. The fire was kindled. The victim, as the flames rose, warned the people against a priest who was present, offered up a brief prayer, and "casting down his head into the smothering smoke, yielded up his life."

Two gentlemen of considerable property in the county perished by a similar fate the same day—Thomas Higbed, of Horndon-on-the-Hill, and Thomas Causton, of Thundersley. Both these, being persons of note, had been argued with by Bonner himself before their apprehension; and being afterwards condemned in the Consistory Court of St. Paul's, they were brought down, bound in the same cart with Hunter. Turning, therefore, from the yet smoking pile at the town's end, Justice Brown and the Sheriff took the other prisoners and passed on, despatching Higbed by the flames in his native village, and then proceeding to Rayleigh as the nearest town to the other prisoner's residence, Causton was there bound to the stake and burnt. This took place on the 26th of March, 1555. Other executions of a like kind rapidly followed. On the 28th of the same month, William Pigot was burned at Braintree, and Stephen Knight at Maldon; and the day following, John Laurence, previously a priest, but who had been solemnly degraded on receiving sentence, was carried to the pile in a chair, being too weak to walk, and was consumed at Colchester. On the 10th of June, John Ardley and John Sympson, both agricultural labourers at Great Wigborough, met the same fate, the first at Rayleigh, the latter at Rochford,—the prisoners being carried to their death so far from home, because it was probably felt that the free opinions of the people of that district required a warning check. Sir Richard Rich, of Leighs, the chief destroyer of the monasteries, and the great recipient of church spoil under Henry VIII. and Edward VI., was peculiarly active in these persecutions, as if desirous of securing, by his zeal in upholding the spiritual power of Rome, the share he had grasped of its temporalities. Under his superintendence, Thomas Hawkes, described as a gentleman and a courtier, who had been apprehended for leaving his child unbaptized, was put to death at Coggeshall, on the 10th of June. Previously to his execution, he had agreed with his friends to give them a sign by

holding up his hands, so that they might know whether it was possible for a man to retain his presence of mind in the pain of burning; and "when his speech was taken away by violence of the flames, his skin also drawn together, and his fingers consumed with the fire, so that now all men thought certainly he had been gone, suddenly, and contrary to all expectation, being mindful of his promise, he reached up his hands burning on a light fire, which was marvellous to behold," whereat there followed an outburst of applause from the people. In the same month, Thomas Watts, a linen-draper, of Billericay, who had been sent by Lord Rich to London, and there condemned by Bonner, was carried to an inn in Chelmsford, kept by a person named Scot, and after taking leave of his wife and six children, was burnt in that town. The next sufferers were a company of Coggeshall men, of whom Nicholas Chamberlain, a weaver, was burnt at Colchester, on the 14th of June; Thomas Osmond, a fuller, at Manningtree, on the 15th; and William Bamford, a weaver, at Harwich, on the afternoon of the same day.

Rochford Hundred was a stronghold of the Protestants. When expelled from the churches, they met for worship in the woods and fields. A congregation of about a hundred were in the habit of meeting in Plumborow Wood and Beckes Wood, in Hookley, to listen to the sermons of William Tymes, the expelled curate of that parish. Tyrell, the owner of the woods, enraged at what he considered a desecration of his property, or as the record says, "that his woods should be polluted with sermons," went down and commenced a hunt after the offenders. Tymes was caught, and sent in the custody of the parish constables to Bonner's court; from which he passed to Smithfield, on the 14th of April, 1556, and there died by fire; together with Richard Spurge, shearman; Thos. Spurge, fuller; John Cavell, weaver; George Ambrose, fuller, all of Bocking; and Robert Drakes, the former minister of Thundersley.

By practice Bonner seems to have grown more expert in the work of persecution. In the second year of his reign of blood he began to send his victims to the stake not singly but in batches of six or eight; and the floor of his dark Consistory Court may well have been regarded as the valley of the shadow of death. His course was to have his prisoners before him again and again, and to argue with them, generally on the mystical doctrine of the sacrament or the authority of the Roman church. Menaces, which it was known too well would be fulfilled, were followed by kind words and soft persuasions. These arts prevailed with some, and they recanted. Those who remained firm were usually sent back for a few hours after the

last trial to the place of their confinement, which in the case of many of them was a building called the dog-kennel. In the afternoon they were brought up again, condemned, and handed over to the secular power for execution under the royal writ, which followed as a matter of course.

Pursuing the progress of this painful part of Essex history, we find that under sentences of this kind six persons were burnt at Colchester in May of that year, viz., John Mace, apothecary; John Spencer, weaver; Simon Joyne, sawyer; Richard Nichols, weaver; John Hammond, tanner, all residents of that town; and Christopher Lyster, a labourer, of Dagenham. Some of these, it will be seen, were in humble life; but Bonner stooped still lower. Hugh Laverock, a cripple, and John Apprice, a blind man, both of Barking, were seized and carried into his presence. They battled boldly with the judge, who clenched his usual arguments with the grim words of death; and on the 15th of May they were taken to Stratford and there died by the fire and the fagot. When at the stake the cripple threw away his crutch, and exclaimed to his fellow-sufferer, "Be of good comfort, my brother, for my Lord of London is our good physician: he will heal us both shortly—thee of thy blindness and me of my lameness." The next day Catherine Hut, of Bocking, widow; Joan Hornes, Elizabeth Thackwell, and Margaret Ellis, three maidens of Billericay and Burstead, were burnt in Smithfield; and on the 27th of June thirteen suffered together at Stratford. Their names were Lyon Couch, merchant; Henry Wye, brewer, of Stanford-le-Hope; Wm. Holliwell, of Waltham Holy Cross; Ralph Jackson, servant, of Chipping Ongar; Lawrence Parman, smith, of Hoddesdon, Herts.; John Derifal, labourer, of Rettendon; Edmund Hurst, labourer, of Colchester; Thomas Bowyer, weaver, of Great Dunmow; George Scarles, tailor, of White Notley; Henry Adlington, sawyer, of Greenstead; John Routh, labourer, of Wix; Elizabeth Pepper, wife of a weaver at Colchester; and Agnes George, wife of a labourer at West Bergholt, who had another wife burnt in the postern in Colchester. The eleven men were bound to three stakes; the two women were placed loose in the centre of the circle of fire, and they died with such calmness and constancy that "it made all the lookers-on to marvel."

The persecutions raged with peculiar ferocity at Colchester. The borough had become the chief post of "the Gospellers," as the Protestants were called. A quaint old writer says—"This town, for the earnest profession of the gospel, became like unto a city upon a hill, and as a candle upon a candlestick,



gave great light to all those who for the comfort of their consciences came to conferre there from divers places of the realme, and repairing to common innes, had by night their christian exercises, whiche in other places could not be gotten. At the Kynge's Head, in Colchester, and at other innes in the said towne, the afflicted christians had set places appointed for themselves to meete at." More rigorous measures were, therefore, adopted ; and about this period 22 persons apprehended in that town and district were driven on foot to London ; but on making a qualified submission they were dismissed. It was only a short respite, however, for some of them. Several who came from Great Bentley, not only continued to absent themselves from the parish church, but formed parties by stealth to worship God in their own way. Enraged at this, the Rev. Sir Thomas Tye, the priest, sent a letter to Bonner, dated from Colchester, the 18th of Dec. 1556, in which, amongst other complaints against the Protestants, he said—"They assemble together upon the Sabbath day in the time of divine service, sometimes in one house and sometimes in another, and there keep their privy conventicles and schools of heresy. The questmen in your archdeaconry visitation allege that forasmuch as they were once presented and now sent home, they have no more to do with them, nor none other. Your officer saith, namely, Master Boswell, that the council sent them not home without a great consideration. I pray God some of your officers prove not favourers of heretics ; the rebels are stout in the town of Colchester." He adds that the Hythe was a perverse place. On this appeal, Master Tyrell, or as he is sometimes called, Edmund Tyrell, Esq., who so often figures in these persecutions, was put upon the track of the offenders. Aided by William Simnell, of Colchester, the bailiff of the hundred, and a party of constables, he made a descent upon Great Bentley in the night of the first Sunday in Lent. William Munt and his wife were seized in their beds. Tyrell, irritated at Rose Allin, their daughter, who had the boldness to assert in the midst of this peril that her faith would not flinch from the flame, laid hold of her and held the back of her hand over a burning candle till the very sinews cracked asunder. Yet no cry of anguish escaped her, and when he flung her from him she quietly asked if he had done. Altogether there were ten persons taken in this religious foray, the others being John Johnson, labourer, of Thorpe ; William Bongeor, glazier ; Thomas Benold, tallow-chandler ; Agnes Silverside ; Helen Ewring, the wife of a miller ; Elizabeth Folkes, maid-servant, all of Colchester ; and William Pareas, fuller, of Bocking. Six



of these were committed to the old Moat-hall, the other four to the Castle, and after several examinations they were condemned without being sent to London. The execution took place on the 2nd of August, 1557, the six town prisoners being burnt by the bailiffs of the borough in the forenoon, on a plot of ground just outside the town wall, clapping their hands for joy while in the flames; and the four from the county, who were in charge of the Sheriff, suffered the same death in the Castle yard in the afternoon. Agnes Bongeor and Margaret Thurston were burnt at the same place on the 17th of September; and William Harris, Richard Day, and Christian George, on the 26th of May, 1558. These were the last martyrdoms that took place at Colchester.

The case of George Eagles is rather a singular one. He was a tailor, with little or no learning, but "being eloquent and of good utterance," he set up as a preacher, and travelling from place to place, and from county to county, to exhort and encourage the suffering Protestants, he obtained the nickname of "Trudgeover." He was compelled to abide in hiding places in the fields and woods, a royal proclamation having been sent through Essex and three other counties, offering a reward of £20 for his apprehension. One day he was recognized in Colchester, and fled. The mob, with their zeal quickened by the promised gold, hunted him into the country. He was caught in a corn field, and taken to London, but was afterwards sent down to Chelmsford for trial. The charge against him was high treason, for having seditiously assembled companies of more than six together; and he was further accused of having on one occasion prayed that "God would turn Queen Mary's heart, or take her away." He was doomed to a traitor's death. "This thing done," says the narrator of his execution, "he was carried to the new inn, called the sign of the Crown, in Chelmsford, by the bailiffs, which some of them were they that before did their best to take him; and being in the Inn, one Richard Potts the elder, an innholder, dwelling at the sign of the Cock in the same town, did much trouble him in persuading him to confess he had offended the Queen in his prayer, which he was condemned for, and to ask her forgiveness. To whom he said he had not offended her Grace in that behalf; so, in process of time, he was laid upon a sled, with an hurdle on it, and drawn to the place of execution, being fast bound, having in his hand a psalm book, of the which he read very devoutly all the way with a loud voice till he came there; and being on the ladder, this aforesaid Potts did much trouble him with the matter aforesaid, when he would have uttered other things, till such time as the sheriff commanded

Potts to hold his peace, and trouble him no more. So he made his confession, and stood very constant still; then he was turned off the ladder. After he had hanged a small time, having a great check with the halter, immediately one of the bailiffs cut the halter asunder, and he fell to the ground, being still alive, although much annoyed with the check he had of the ladder. Then one William Swallow, of Chelmsford, a bailiff, did draw him to the sled that he was drawn thither on, and laid his neck thereon, and with a cleaver, such as is occupied in many men's kitchens, and blunt, did hackle off his head; and sometimes hit his neck, and sometimes hit his chin, and did foully mangle him, and so opened him. Notwithstanding, this blessed martyr of Christ abode stedfast and constant in the very midst of his torments, till such time as this tormenter, William Swallow, did pluck the heart out of his body. The body being divided into four parts, and his bowels burnt, was brought to the foresaid Swallow's door, and there laid upon the fish stalls before his door, till they had made ready a horse to carry his quarters, one to Colchester, and the rest to Harwich, Chelmsford, and St. Rouse's. His head was set up at Chelmsford on the Market Cross, on a long pole, till the wind did blow it down, and lying certain days in the streets tumbled about, one caused it to be buried in the churchyard in the night."

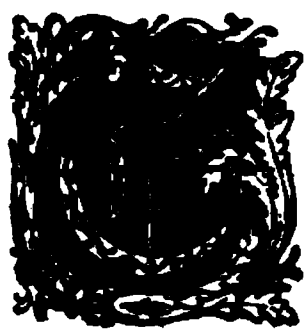
This is the grim catalogue of those who were actually martyred in the county. Other Essex people, however, suffered elsewhere. Ralph Allerton, of Bentley; James Austoo; Margery his wife; and Richard Roth, were burnt at Islington on the 17th of September, 1557. John Went, of Langham, shearman, in Smithfield, on the 27th of January, 1556; Thomas Loseby, Henry Ramsey, Thomas Thirtel, Margaret Hide, and Agnes Stanley, sent up by Lord Rich, at the same place, on the 12th of April, 1557; as did William Sweeting, a bailiff and farmer, of Boxted, on the 18th of October, and Thomas Whittle, a priest, in the previous year. Altogether 72 persons from Essex perished in these persecutions; when the death of the queen quenched the fires, and burst open the doors of the prisons, in which others were lingeringly ripening for a like doom.

We turn with sad and sickened heart from this red page of religious ferocity; and with the conviction, too, that Mary did as much as any other sovereign of that time to complete the reformation in England. Her own bigotry and her evil counsellors led her into acts which shocked the whole nation, and, apart from questions of doctrine, produced a political feeling against the faith she professed, which survives to the present hour. Her persecutions, too, gave an appearance of justifica-

tion to those retaliating penal laws, some of them fearfully severe, which at one period prohibited the Roman Catholic from the exercise of his religion except by stealth and under peril, and in a modified shape continued to press upon him even to our own time.

### CHAPTER XIII.

**QUEEN ELIZABETH—PERSECUTION OF THE CATHOLICS AND PURITANS—VISIT OF THE QUEEN TO ESSEX—THE SPANISH ARMADA, AND WARLIKE PREPARATIONS IN THE COUNTY—THE QUEEN AT TILBURY FORT—THE QUEEN OF SCOTS—EXECUTION OF THE EARL OF ESSEX.**



**ELIZABETH**, who from her known sentiments, and as the daughter of Anne Boleyn, was looked to with hope by the Protestant party, had taken shelter in this county during part of the last reign from the unsisterly treatment of Mary. At one period she is said to have resided in a part, called the Fort, of the castle or manor-house of the Fitzwalters at Woodham Walter, which her mother, in her days of beauty and power, had been fond of visiting. She sought safety, too, in a more secluded part of the county—Great Bardfield, her retreat being the old house called the Place Farm, in which two rooms used to be pointed out as specially appropriated for the residence of the royal fugitive. At the time of Mary's death she was at Hatfield, in Hertfordshire, from which place she proceeded to London to take possession of the throne.

The first acts of Elizabeth showed no hostility to the Romish Church. She took the coronation oath according to the ancient form. But whatever might have been her intentions, the savage and insulting answer of Pope Paul to her ambassador, in which he denied her right to the throne and demanded mean submission to his will, roused her inherent high spirit, and threw her back upon the reformers as a matter of political necessity and self defence. A parliament assembled, and under its sanction the mass book was soon superseded by the liturgy as then settled, and the Protestant worship was restored in all the churches. Freedom of conscience, however, came not with it—perhaps in consequence of the identity of the religious controversy with politics. The queen declared she would allow no other form of worship than that which she herself adopted. The flames of persecution for heresy were indeed quenched, but the victims were sent to the scaffold for their religious belief under

the name of traitors. It was made treason to deny the spiritual supremacy of the queen—a point which it was impossible for the Romanist to admit; and of the 200 who were executed for their faith in this reign, only one, it is stated, refused to acknowledge Elizabeth's title to the throne. It was made death for a Roman Catholic priest to be found in the land, and little chambers as hiding places were provided for them in the residences and manor-houses of the Roman Catholic nobility, one of which was accidentally brought to light a few years ago in a secret corner of Ingatestone hall. Persons who obstinately persisted in absenting themselves from church were liable to suffer capitally as felons—a law levelled not merely at the Romanists, but also at the Puritans, several of whom were executed; but by degrees the persecution against them subsided. The measures against the Catholics, however, continued. We find no trace to identify those proceeded against in Essex; but, says the author of the General History of Europe, speaking of the time from the Armada to the close of Elizabeth's reign,—“Sixty-one priests, forty-seven laymen, and two gentlewomen suffered capital punishment, which in nearly all these instances consisted in the butchery of the victim while still alive and in his perfect senses.” The Ecclesiastical Court, which was arbitrarily established by the queen's will, to seek out heresies and other crimes, is described as a “real inquisition, attended with all the iniquities as well as cruelties inseparable from that tribunal.”

In the year 1579 the queen made a progress through this part of her dominions, and so gratified was she with the homage paid and the hospitality afforded her, that she tarried long in the houses of many of the Essex nobility. We find the royal journey thus briefly and bluntly recorded:—

“August the 5th, from Greenwich to Havering, and there five days; August 10, Woodcroft-hall, Mr. Weston Browne's, and there two days; August 12, to Lees, the Lord Riche's, and there three days; August 16, to Gosfield, the Lady Matraver's, and there five days; August 20, to Small Bridge, Mr. Walgrave's, and there two days; August 22, to Ipswich, and there four days; August 26, to Harwich, there three days; August 29, to the Lord Darcy's, and there three days; Septemb. 1, to Colchester, and there two days; Septemb. 3, to Layer Marney, Mrs. Tuke's, and there two days; Septemb. 5, to Maldon, Mrs. Harries, two days; Septemb. 7, to Moulham, Sir Tho. Mildmay's, and there four days; Sept. 4, to the Lady Petre's, at Ingatestone, and there three days; Sept. 14, to Havering.”

Thus the queen resided upwards of a month in the county. In the homes of the Essex nobility she was doubtless entertained with all the rude pomp and plenteous hospitality of the age. The drawing-room floors were strewn with fresh rushes, and the nobles had resort to all those luxuries which had then begun to be the reproach of the day, though they would now be

regarded as mean and miserable in a third-rate household.\* Of the manner in which Maldon and Chelmsford testified their feeling we have no record. We cannot believe they allowed the maiden queen to dwell amongst them for days without due greeting. At Harwich, however, where she was lodged at a house in the middle of the High-street, she was right royally entertained by the borough ; and when she took her departure, the magistrates attended her in procession "as far as the windmill out of the town." Pleased with the dutiful attention she had received, her majesty seems to have designed to reward it with some special privilege or favour, and demanded of the officials what they had to request of her. "Nothing, but to wish your majesty a good journey," was the reply. Struck with this spirit of independence, the queen turned round her horse to take a survey of the town which found itself in such happy circumstances, and exclaiming, "A pretty town, and wants nothing," took her leave of the then little paradise of content, nestling in the corner of the county. Colchester, too, which appears to have acted upon the principle of loyalty to the crown, "though it hang upon a bush," unlocked its liberality, and put on its brightest attire to receive her. The corporation was as generous of its fine words and its silver to Elizabeth, as it had been profuse of its old ale and its edibles to Mary. The raiment which its officers doffed seems rather grotesque in these plain days, but doubtless it was the height of splendour in those times ; and accordingly we find it officially ordered that—

"The bailiffs and aldermen in the receipt of her majestie shall ride upon

\* Hollingshed, writing shortly before that period, says—"There are old men yet dwelling in the village where I remain, which have noted three things to be marvellously altered in England within their sound remembrance. One is the multitude of chimnies lately erected ; whereas in their young days there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish towns of the realm (the religious houses and manor places of their lords always excepted, and peradventure some great personage), but each made his fire against a reredosse in the hall where he dined and dressed his meat. The second is the great amendment of lodging, for said they, our fathers, and we ourselves, have lain full oft upon straw pallettes covered only with a sheet, under coverlets made of dagswaine or hopsharlots (I use their own terms), and a good round log under their head instead of a bolster. If it were so that the father or good man of the house had a matrass or flock bed, and thereto a sack of chaff to rest his head upon, he thought himself to be as well lodged as the lord of the town, so well were they contented. Pillows, said they, were thought meet only for women in childbed ; as for servants, if they had any sheet above them it was well, for seldom had they any under their bodies to keep them from the pricking straws that ran oft through the canvass and raised their hardened hides. The third thing they tell us of is the exchange of platen (so called I suppose from tree or wood) into pewter and wooden spoons, into silver or tin. For so common were all sorts of treene vessels in old time that a man should hardly have found four pieces of pewter (of which one was peradventure salt) in a good farmer's house."

comely geldings with foot clothes in damask or satin cassocks or coats, or else jackets of the same, with satin sleeves in their scarlet gowns, with caps and black velvet tippets. The conceil to attend upon the bailiffs and aldermen at the same time, upon comely geldings, with foot-clothes, in grogram or silk cassock coats or jackets with silk doublets, or sleeves at the least, in their livery morray, gowns with caps, &c."

Thus attired, the corporation met the queen. The recorder, Sir Francis Walsingham, one of the Secretaries of State, and a leading statesman of the time, had been requested to prepare one of his best orations, and her Majesty was presented with a cup of silver, double gilt, of the value of 20 marks,\* "with 40 angels in the same"—coins with an angel impressed thereon, of the value at that time of about 10s. each; which, remembering the strong tinge of avarice in the royal constitution, was no doubt a most acceptable present. The officers attendant upon the queen did not disdain to receive largess from the borough; and we might almost imagine that the courtiers were struck with the wealth of the town and the flavour of its good fare, as a few years after they insisted on exercising the right of purveyance within it—that is, the taking of corn and other provisions required for the queen's household, from which the borough had been before exempt. This prerogative of the crown, under which the storehouses of the people in this and the neighbouring counties could be searched, and the most precious corn, with the fattest animal and the plumpest capon, could be carried off to furnish the royal table and feed the hungry courtiers, was felt to be grievously oppressive. Payment for these commodities was very doubtful. When it was made the amount was very inadequate, the rates being fixed in former times, when prices were much below those which then prevailed. The Colchester folk, therefore, made a bold stand in defence of their invaded cupboards. With all their loyalty they respectfully intimated that her Majesty could not be allowed to forage for food within that liberty. It is almost needless to say that, like all who came into conflict with Elizabeth, they were beaten, and were compelled to compound for the safety of their sirloins by the payment of £6 a year.

The Puritans made a bold stand in parliament against these abuses of the prerogative, and in assertion of public liberty; but their freedom of speech in the House of Commons was haughtily put down by the queen. Morris, a lawyer, for bringing forward a motion of this kind, was degraded, and kept a close prisoner in Tilbury Castle for some years. Wentworth, too, a name which we find in the roll of Essex members in this reign, was placed in peril and imprisoned by the crown, for

\* The mark was of 13s. 4d. value.



asserting those principles which are now the recognized corner-stones of the constitution, but which contrast strongly with the bated breath and cringing conduct of the House of Commons of that day.

There would almost appear to have been something of fascination or fate about the popularity of Elizabeth. On turning to history it is difficult to understand its foundation. Her love was rather a dangerous distinction, so apt as it was to be curdled by jealousy. Her hatreds were sanguinary. Her notions of government led her to treat the House of Commons with a hauteur which to us appears unendurable. She sternly crushed every rising feeling of civil and religious liberty. She declared she would admit no toleration in her dominions, and Roman Catholics and Puritans were sent to the scaffold. Yet she never lost the favour of the nation, which she possessed on first ascending the throne. Wherever she appeared she was received with enthusiasm; the people were prepared to submit to her will and die in her defence; and when the country was menaced by the Spanish Armada, even the Roman Catholics, proud of the independent position of the kingdom under her sway, enrolled themselves as volunteers in the army. Essex was not backward in these proofs of loyalty. The queen, conscious that her power depended on the good will and the strong arms of her subjects, took care that they should be well trained in the military art. In all parts of the country, therefore, the rattle of arms and the tramp of the soldier were heard. All men between the ages of 16 and 60, if not sick, impotent, or lame, were required to muster at stated times at certain points, for the purpose of drill; and weapons and armour, according to the laws and regulations, were ordered to be brought for their use. This was especially enforced at the time when the haughty Spaniard was preparing to invade our island home. A sort of conscription, too, was carried out, and Essex men were impressed as soldiers for the foreign wars in which the sovereign at different times engaged. When, in 1585, aid was rendered to the United Provinces, 150 soldiers, fully armed and equipped, were provided by the county, and placed under the command of Sir Walter Walker. Of this force Colchester raised eight shot and two pikemen, armed and clothed in blue coats, at an expense of £21. 18s. 8d. In the year after the defeat of the Armada, when it was resolved to retaliate upon the Spaniards, 250 soldiers and 60 pioneers were impressed here, of which the boroughs furnished their proportion, the order being that there should be an allowance to every soldier, at the common charge of the county, of 13s. 4d., and to every pioneer 6s. 8d.,



which the deputy lieutenants of the county and the authorities of the boroughs were to see collected, with conduct money at the rate of 8d. per day, sufficient to bring them to Romford, where they were to be delivered to the captain at ten o'clock in the morning of the 20th of October. Again, in 1590-1, 150 able men were raised in the same way in the county, and despatched to the aid of Henry IV. against the Leaguers; a further body in March; and in July 150 more were impressed and embarked at Harwich for service in Normandy; followed by a further body of 135 in 1596, who were despatched from the same port, for France.

When the world was looking on, not without admiration of the attitude of England and its Queen, expecting to see this kingdom overwhelmed by the Spanish Armada, and the nation, resolved and armed, awaited the onslaught with set teeth, this county was placed in a position to make a stand for the throne and the hearth-stone. The plan was, for the Armada to sail up the Thames and land the whole Spanish army upon its banks. Essex might thus have to break the first lance with the invader. The people therefore furbished up their armour, and all the able men, even youths, studiously applied themselves to the expert handling of the matchlock and the pike. The sea-ports of the county sent forth their vessels to swell the pigmy fleet which at first hung doubtfully upon the rear of its bulky antagonist, and then, gaining confidence from success, went in and scattered that mighty armament to the winds, which literally fought on the side of this country, the storm and tempest contributing in no slight degree to the final discomfiture of the proud foe. Colchester sent three ships, the *Foresight*, of London, the *Margaret and John*, with the *Mark Speedwell* pinnace, manned, and victualled for two months, and provided with ammunition, the order being that they should join the navy on the seas, "for the defence of the kingdom," by the 25th of April. To meet the charge a tax of 2s. in the pound on goods, and 3s. on land, was levied on all the inhabitants of the borough—a heavy burthen in those times, but it appears to have been cheerfully and patriotically submitted to. Maldon contributed its little war craft and its ocean sons, as it was bound to do by ancient charter; and there is reason to believe that from along our sea-board went forth many of those vessels, fitted out at the private expense of the nobility and gentry, with which Effingham, after the first encounter, found himself promptly reinforced.

Dispositions for defence were made along the coasts; and at Tilbury Fort, then a mere block-house, which had been erected

by Henry VIII., an army of 22,000 foot and 1,000 horse was encamped to protect London. Where the peaceful mill now stands, a picturesque object in the landscape, stretched the long lines of martial tents, though the last faint traces of the camp are now almost obliterated. It was on this spot that Elizabeth uttered that memorable speech which infused heart into the nation and stamped her as a heroine. Mounted on a war charger she appeared in the midst of the army like another Boadicea, with happily a better fate; and riding along, and greeting with a noble smile of confidence the serried lines of the soldiery drawn up to receive her—presenting, perhaps, the proudest of our historical pictures—she gathered the host around her and thus addressed them:—

“My loving people, we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear: I have always so behaved myself, that under God I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects. And therefore I am come amongst you at this time, not as for my recreation or sport, but being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all; to lay down, for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart of a king, and of a king of England too; and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realms: to which rather than any dishonour should grow by me, I myself will take up arms: I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already by your forwardness, that you have deserved rewards and crowns; and we do assure you by the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time my lieutenant-general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble and worthy subject; not doubting by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over these enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.”

These words awoke the tenderness and commanded the admiration of the soldiery for the queen. “An attachment to her person,” says the historian, “became a kind of enthusiasm amongst them; and they asked one another whether it were possible that Englishmen could abandon this glorious cause, and could display less fortitude than appeared in the female sex, or could ever by any dangers be induced to relinquish the defence of their heroic princess.” Strange it is, and a reproach, too, that the spot on which this speech was spoken has been left, from the spring of 1588 to this present year of grace, unmarked by even a humble stone.

When, on the 19th of July, the Armada, stretching a distance of seven miles in the form of a crescent, was first descried by a Scottish pirate in the channel, and Effingham hurried out of Plymouth harbour to encounter it, all those persons in the

county and the boroughs who had been trained with a view to the defence of the kingdom, received orders to proceed instantly to their places of rendezvous on pain of death. Happily, however, they were not called on to advance a pike or fire a shot. Those wooden walls, with the expert hands and stout hearts behind them, which have ever since maintained their superiority, kept the foot of the invader from the strand. The Armada, the most magnificent fleet that up to that time had appeared upon the ocean, was harried and hunted, scattered and destroyed, by the English vessels, whose small size at first made them appear contemptible to their bulky antagonists. Not one half of that proud expedition, which had been called and was thought "the Invincible," returned to Spain; and the soldiers and sailors, worn out and dispirited, filled all the country "with accounts of the desperate valour of the English, and of the tempestuous violence of that ocean which surrounds them." Essex, like the rest of the kingdom, joyously returned to its peaceful avocations and a sense of security, after the escape from this peril, by which England was in danger of being degraded into a province of Spain. The county, too, readily joined in the measures of retaliation which were afterwards tried, and its sea-ports furnished three ships for the operations at Cadiz; Colchester, which does not appear to have had a fitting vessel at hand, paying £200 for its share.

The melancholy event which casts a cloud over this reign, and is traceable rather to the mean jealousies and petty rivalries of the woman than to the state necessities of the Queen, is the rigorous treatment and the final execution or murder of Mary Queen of Scots; but it has but slight connexion with this county. Sir Walter Mildmay was one of the parties sent by Elizabeth to Mary in her prison, to propose terms of accommodation to her; and when the Duke of Norfolk, seduced by her beauty and his own ambition, aspired to the hand of the captive queen, and was detected in his conspiracy, he fled into Essex for shelter. He is stated to have lain some time concealed in the manor house of Astelyns, in High Ongar, then a moated mansion with a spacious park. Hunted from his hiding-place, however, he was soon taken. The beautiful vision which had led him into paths of doubtful loyalty was fatal to him; and instead of leading Mary back to the Scottish throne he had the block for a bride.

When Elizabeth, overcoming the tender promptings of her passion, bade the axe fall on the neck of her beloved Devereux Earl of Essex, a county man participated in the treachery or neglect which led to the sacrifice of that noble life. Edward

Wiseman, the owner of Little Mapleston, had followed the Earl through most of his fortunes, and when his master lay a condemned man in the Tower, he is said to have been entrusted by him with a letter to the queen. Her majesty, it is known, as she found her fits of fond affection returning, had again and again signed the warrant, but cancelled it in the hope of such an appeal. But the letter came not. Wiseman withheld it, as the Countess of Nottingham withheld the magic ring whose mute recalling of former scenes would have arrested the headsmen's hand; and he thus helped to paint that melancholy picture which history presents to us of Elizabeth dying on the carpet where she had lain ten nights and days, mourning over the unforgiving spirit which the treachery of others had induced her to exhibit towards her favourite. Tradition asserts that Wiseman was so smitten with remorse that he vowed never to lie down in a bed again; and causing an Essex oak to be shapen into the form of a bed and bolster, he lay upon this till his death, as an expiation of his lack of true friendship and fidelity.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

PREVALENCE OF PURITAN PRINCIPLES IN THE COUNTY—  
PLAGUE AND FAMINE IN ESSEX—SUFFERINGS OF LORD  
GREY—GUNPOWDER PLOT—TAXATION IN THE COUNTY—  
INTRODUCTION OF MANUFACTURES—ESSEX IN THE DIS-  
PUTES WITH CHARLES I. AND THE PARLIAMENT.



**D**URING the reign of James I., "The English Solomon," as he has been called, the county lay calm but not passionless. The bearing of the king towards the Parliament—the distaste of the people for the projected marriage of Prince Charles with a princess of Spain, and the preparatory loosing of the restrictions upon the Roman Catholics—the hold which the Puritans, who, like the Puseyites of the present day, still remained within the pale of the church, had obtained on the religious mind of the country\*—and the constant craving of the court for money, with the manner in which it was lavished upon favourites, were slowly gathering those political clouds which in the time of Charles broke upon

\* The Puritanical sect had, indeed, gone so far that a book of discipline was secretly subscribed by above 500 clergymen, and the Presbyterian government thereby established in the midst of the church, notwithstanding the rigour of the prelates and of the high commissioner.—*D'Essex*, p. 328.

the nation in a storm of blood. These discontents were taking root not only in the towns, but in the agricultural districts of Essex, and they grew up into a strong feeling in favour of those measures which led to the triumph of the republican party.

On the journey of the king from Scotland he was met and welcomed to the throne by a band of Essex men. On approaching London his party was joined by Sir Robert Denny, with a train of 140 men, gathered from his estates at Waltham Abbey and Waltham Cross. These were all arrayed in blue liveries, and as a spontaneous demonstration of the people, added much to the popularity and splendour of his reception. Pestilence and famine afflicted the country in the early part of this reign. The plague, which was making fearful havoc with human life in the metropolis at the time of the accession, spread through various parts of Essex in the following year (1604), and extended to Colchester, which again suffered from the dreadful calamity in 1631, 1665, and 1666,—no fewer than 4,781 of the inhabitants being swept off in the two latter years. Vast numbers in the county also perished; and the terror and gloom produced by this dreadful scourge, then not unfrequent, but now happily unknown in England, may be easily conceived. Households were desolated in a day. The most loved objects, smitten by an invisible hand with the sword of the dread infection, were approached with trembling; and in these times, so great was the alarm felt, that the plague-stricken victim was sometimes left to perish alone in the tainted chamber of death.

In 1608, from dearth and failure of the crops, want was felt throughout the kingdom. In this county extraordinary and arbitrary measures were taken to prevent the keeping back of corn while the common people were clamouring for food. The constables of the parishes in the county and of the wards in the boroughs, were directed to search out all those who had corn in their possession. They were to take an account of the number of acres they had grown, the quantity of grain remaining in their barns and granaries, and the contracts they had made for the sale of it. In proportion to the quantity he held, "every person was ordered to bring weekly to market so many quarters or bushels of corn as he had not directly sold to the poor artificers or day labourers of the parish within which he dwelt." It would seem, too, that the royal mind contemplated some interference in the drunkards' flagon of ale, as in a return as to the maltsters, bakers, and brewers, an account of the tipplers of the parish or ward was to be included, with, of course, their practices and capacity of consumption.

Two Essex men were implicated in Sir Walter Rayleigh's conspiracy against the authority of James—Lord Grey, and Lord Cobham. They were condemned, but escaped with the loss of their estates, and the latter died in the extremest of poverty. Stripped of Radwinter Hall and his other possessions, deserted by his friends, even by his wife, though she had a noble jointure which the confiscators could not touch, the noble peer, who had fared sumptuously every day, knew not where to find his meal for the morrow. He was saved from actual starvation by the feeling aid of a poor laundress whom he had employed, and at last died in a miserable garret.

The celebrated letter which led to the discovery and the frustration of the foul gunpowder plot was written to an Essex landowner—the Lord Monteagle, whose country seat was Great Hallingbury Hall, now the residence of J. Archer Houblon, Esq. His town house was at Bethnal Green, which at the present day would be thought a strange location for an aristocratic peer. When, in 1605, Percy and the little band of wild and fierce fanatics had completed their horrible preparations—when the 36 barrels of gunpowder had been deposited in the vaults beneath the houses of Parliament, covered with fagots and rubbish,—when Fawkes, a man of good family in Yorkshire, who had served as an officer in the Spanish service, distinguished amongst these “heroes in villany” for daring and determined courage, had undertaken to apply the desolating spark, compunction seized some of the conspirators at the thought that many catholic peers, who had seats in the house, must perish in the explosion. Lord Monteagle was of this number; and the following letter, written, it is believed, by Tresham, a relative, one of the band, advising him to retire to his Essex seat, was thrust into the hand of his servant in the street:—

“My Lord,—Out of the love I bear to some of your friends I have a care of your preservation, therefore would advise you, as you tender your life, to devise some excuse to shift off your attendance at this Parliament. For God and man have conceived to punish the wickedness of this time. And think not slightly of this advertisement; but retire yourself into your county, where you may expect the event in safety. For though there be no appearance of any stir, yet, I say, they will receive a terrible blow this Parliament, and yet they shall not see who hurts them. This counsel is not to be contemned, because it may do you good, and can do you no harm: for the danger is past as soon as you have burned this letter. And I hope God will give you grace to make good use of it, unto whose holy protection I commend you.”

Lord Monteagle carried this letter to the Secretary of State. Search was made, and the deadly mine discovered. Thus an Essex Roman Catholic was the instrument of saving the Protestant royal family and the Protestant Parliament from the



death which a handful of his desperate co-religionists had prepared for them.

The principles of taxation were at this period ill understood and loosely carried out. The House of Commons, indeed, voted subsidies, but the king had various auxiliary schemes for wringing money from the people. Cash was raised by James, as by preceding monarchs, by writs of privy seal—a system under which the people now began to wince. Essex suffered from these exactions; it was besides called upon, together with the towns, in 1609, to contribute to the expense of making Prince Henry a knight; again in 1612 to supply funds towards the cost of marrying the king's daughter; and it did so, though not with very graceful mind or willing hand. Patents were another expedient for replenishing the royal purse. They were granted in the most vexatious manner and for the most trivial purposes. There is one on record to Thomas Benne, and two other lives, to keep an Inn, to be called the Ship, at Colchester, which “the somme of five poundes of lawfull money of England,” moved James of his “especial grace” to grant; and it appears this was part of a regular system, as in the patent the money is stated to be paid “into the office of the receiver of our rents, fines, and profits of licenses of innkeepers.” These patent houses had some special privileges, it must be presumed, for ordinary ale-houses were at the same time licensed and controlled by the magistrates in the several districts of the county. More correct ideas of the principles of trade, however, began to prevail about this period. These petty monopolies, together with others of greater magnitude, gradually gave way before the free tone which the parliament adopted; and manufactures which had been planted in the country by fugitives in former reigns, began to take good root. When the name of the Duke of Alva spread terror amongst the Protestants of the Netherlands, more than a hundred thousand of them fled, many to this county, bringing with them the arts of bay and say making, and the manufacture of woollen cloths, linen, and silks. A colony of the bay makers settled at Colchester, where they long carried on a flourishing and profitable trade, which, however, long since fell off, and has emigrated to the western and northern parts of the kingdom. Others betook themselves to Bocking, Braintree, Halsted, and Coggeshall, imparting to them the manufacturing character which they still retain, though they have substituted the beautiful fabrics of silk and crape for the ruder bays of the Protestant wanderers to whom they first gave shelter.

On the commencement of the reign of the unfortunate



Charles I.—unfortunate from being the victim of circumstances and of evil counsel, as well as from having to deal with insinuating cant and cruel hypocrisy—this country was engaged in the war with Spain, and the coasts of Essex were kept in a state of alarm by the fear of invasion. In the summer of 1625, the year of Charles's accession, a fleet of twenty-eight sail of the enemy was lying at Dunkirk, ready to pounce down upon our shores. Great preparations were made for defence, especially at Harwich and Colchester; the latter port sending out a light vessel to watch the motions of the coming invader. The deputy-lieutenants, too, were active in enrolling and training men in the heart of the county. At the beginning of the autumn a hostile force was descried off Harwich, which, notwithstanding these preparations, was ill supplied with the means of resistance, as appears from a letter hastily written to the bailiff of Colchester, by Mr. Wm. Lynne, of Bradfield-hall, who was panic-stricken at the prospect of the Spaniard being upon him, and his own homestead in peril. "The town," says he, speaking of Harwich, "is weakly provided to defend itself, and the countre soldiers destitute of powder, bullets, and many other necessaries for such an important service. I thinke you shall doe very well to draw your trained band to Harwich, and to come so well provided of all manner of munition as that you may help supplie the wants of your neighbours. This requireth much hast, for dangers are not to be dallied with." However, the enemy, after taking a view of the land, sheered off without exposing himself to the empty muskets of the Harwich heroes. Two years after a force, ordered to be embarked from this district to the aid of the King of Denmark, broke into mutiny, and the militia were called out to coerce them. This was one of the first symptoms of disaffection in the army towards the royal authority; but notwithstanding this, a few months after, 150 men were pressed in the county, and money levied for their outfit, to be despatched as part of the expedition against France, into which Charles madly plunged at the instigation, it is said, of a love-whim of the profligate Buckingham.

Events were now ripening which again converted the county into a battle field between the loyalists and republicans, and by drawing the parliamentary forces around Colchester led to one of the most memorable sieges to be found recorded in the annals of the kingdom. The puritans had become strong in the land. Along with their pious horror of a preacher in a white surplice, and their other religious notions, they mingled stern yearnings for civil freedom, which led them to adopt the most

violent schemes for curtailing the royal prerogatives. The anchor of the people's loyalty had become loosened from its hold. The niggardly grants of the House of Commons starved the war with Spain, which it had stimulated and encouraged, and drove the king into arbitrary measures for raising money to support it : this raised indignation and disgust, and at length open resistance. The commission to compound with the Roman Catholics for the dispensation of the penal laws against them, which helped to fill the royal coffers—the call for ship money—the levying of a forced loan, and the imprisonment of parties for refusing to pay it—the question of tonnage and poundage, or custom duties—above all, perhaps, the infatuated attempt to reduce into practice the absurd notions of kingly power and the unconstitutional principles the monarch inherited from his father, brought on civil war, and involved the whole country in discord and misery. There was rising in the nation a new power and a new spirit, which the king neither recognized nor understood ; and to this fact all his misfortunes are to be traced.

The feeling of discontent and disaffection spread early not only in the towns but in the halls and agricultural homesteads of Essex. The rather indiscriminating loyalty of Colchester, which had manifested itself in the presentation of silver cups, and royal festivals, and showy processions, whatever sovereign was thus to be honoured, had been cooling in the last reign, and at length became utterly prostrate. In 1634 ship money was first demanded of the maritime towns in this county, and Colchester, Maldon, and Harwich, in conjunction with several towns in Suffolk, were ordered to furnish and fit out a ship of 700 tons. The idea of providing a ship was a sham. The object was to raise money ; and the inhabitants of Colchester grudgingly paid their share of the £6,615 for which the order was commuted. In the following year the kingdom was ordered to raise 45 ships ; and £8,000 was exacted from the county under cover of this unpopular tax. Colchester on this occasion flatly refused to pay the £400 which fell to its share. It first stood upon its privileges, which it alleged were invaded ; then pleaded poverty, and the badness of trade ; and at length dribbled out some trifling instalments of the amount. Maldon, which was not ripe for resistance to these arbitrary stretches of royal authority, quietly paid its share of £80 ; Harwich £20 ; Walden £80 ; Thaxted £40. The other towns and villages contributed their due proportions according to the estimate of their means ; and we gather from this some idea of the importance of the towns at that period, Thaxted, as we perceive from the

above, being considered twice as wealthy, and therefore able to pay twice as much, as the borough of Harwich.

As is very common in such cases, the political discontent produced by the plundering of the people under the hateful pretence of prerogative, was further soured by religious feeling. The king, while he was picking the pockets of the people, affected great anxiety for their souls. He sought to curb the prevalence of the puritanical spirit by insisting that all his subjects should conduct their worship according to the forms established by law. To enforce this, a High Court of Commission was appointed, to search out heretical departures from the approved system; and this court, regarded as illegal in its constitution, brought increased odium upon the crown by the severity of its proceedings. Dr. Bastwick, a native of Writtle, one of the finest scholars of his time, then practising as a physician at Colchester, having written several works against the pope and the Latin bishops, in which he maintained an equality or parity between bishops and presbyters, was summoned before the commissioners, fined £1,000, excommunicated, and flung into prison. From his cell, however, he still made his voice heard; and another effort was made to stifle it by dragging him with others before the Star Chamber. In the presence of that tribunal, the name of which is odious in the memory of every Englishman, anticipating the brutal mutilation that was likely to be inflicted upon him, the Doctor broke out into the following appeal:—

“I shall presume to speak to your honours as Paul spoke to the centurion when they were about to whip him. What, will you whip a Roman? So, my good lords, let me say,—What, will you cut off a true and loyal subject's ears for doing his duty to his king and country? Will you cut off a scholar's ears? Will you cut off a doctor of physic's ears, able to cure lords, peers, kings, and emperors? Will you cut off a christian's ears? Will you make curs of christians, my lords? Will you cut off a catholic apostolic, a Roman's, ears? Men, brethren, and fathers, what an age do we live in, that we must thus be exposed to the merciless fury of every malignant spirit.”

The doctor's eloquence, however, did not save his ears. After being placed in the pillory in Palace-yard, he was cropped—the common punishment for sedition at that time—fined £5,000, and doomed to perpetual imprisonment. As the popular party grew more daring, parliament interfered, and in 1640 Dr. Bastwick was brought from his prison in the Scilly Islands, and on his approach to London he was met by a vast crowd, carrying green boughs and flowers, and other emblems of popular rejoicing, and escorted in triumph to the city—a scene which helped to ripen the people for the strange events and the organized resistance to royalty which were rapidly approaching. The doctor's sentence was reversed—save that it was beyond the

power of parliament to restore his ears; and the House of Commons ordered that he should have £5,000 out of the estates of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the high commissioners, and those lords who voted against him in the Star Chamber; but in the midst of civil commotion, the salve thus ordered to be applied to the sufferings of the Essex man was no more thought of, and for a livelihood he resumed the practice of his profession.

On the dawn of the year 1641, all things indicated the approach of civil commotion and open resistance to these indiscreet and arbitrary acts of the crown. The parliament had become strong and bold. The right of the bishops to seats in the House of Peers was sternly contested—clearly as a preparatory step to the substitution of the Presbyterian for the Episcopal form of worship. This scheme found favour in Essex. Petitions were sent up from different places, amongst others from Colchester, against the order of bishops, demanding liberty of conscience, and that church discipline might be established according to the word of God. The latter town tacked to its petition a request that the place might be better fortified; and the Commons, understanding the hint for building bulwarks around such principles, at once granted £1,500 for the purpose of putting the borough and the block-house at Mersey in a state of defence. They well knew that these places would be found in the hands of trusty friends if the sword came to be employed in the conflict with the crown.

A gleam of loyalty broke through the gathering darkness of disaffection in Essex in 1642, which appeared to indicate that the men who, from their position, usually gave tone to the county feeling, were satisfied with the concessions which had been wrung from the king. At the summer assize, through the activity of Sir Thomas Bendish, of Steeple Bumpstead, the following declaration was drawn up by the grand jury and presented to the king. It is a curious specimen of the style of contraction used in writing at that time:—

“ The humble remonstrance and declarac'on of the high sherife, yo'r Ma'ties justices of the peace and gentlemen of the grand juries of the countie of Essex whose names are here subscribed being assembled at the present assises, holden at Chelmsford, the eyghtent' day of July, Ao. Dn. 1642.

“ Most gracious sov'erne, wee beinge fully assured of yo'r Ma'ts pious and reall intentions expressed in yo'r sev'all declarac'ons, as also in a late letter directed unto Sir Tho. Mallet, Kt., yo'r Ma'ts judge of assiesse for this countie, and by him to us published, manifestinge yo'r most christian and zealous resoluc'on to maintaine the true protestant religion into the puritie thereof, ag't the practice of Papisse and the insolences of the sectaries, yo'r constant purpose to uphold the lawes of this yo'r kingdome, and in them the right and p'viledges of parliament, the libertie of yo'r subjects in the freedome of their person and propertie of their estates: And not to infringe any acte consented unto by yo'r Ma'tie this parliament. In full and assuered confidence

of yo'r Ma'tie observacons thereof, wee, yo'r Ma'tie most loyal and obedient subjects, doe render all duty and thankfulnes, and doe assure and faithfully p'mise that for the saftie of yo'r Ma'tis royal p'son and posterities, defence of yo'r rights and just p'rogative. Wee will be readie accordinge to our faithfull allegiance and late p'testacon, to assist yo'r Ma'tie with our p'sons, lives, and fortunes when soev' you shall be pleased to command us. Subscribed by Robt. Smyth, Vicecom'. Tho. Bendyshe, Benja. Ayliff, Willus Wiseman, Henry Mildmay, Gam. Capell, Jo. Tyrell, Fran. Cooke, John Lucas, Robt. Kempe James Altham, Arthur Turner, John Greene, Oliver Raymond, Willis Conyeres, Willus Popsfeild, John Harvie, Willas Lynne, Robt. Wiseman, Tho. Bayles, Eusebie Wright, Francis Gardener, James Harvie, Edw. Eltonhead, Edward, Bendlowes. Of the grand juria, Willus Ayliffe, Hen. Cletherowe, Tho. Manwood, John Aylett, Urias Barker, John Glasscoke, Willus Searle."

The infatuated attempt, however, of Charles to impeach five members of high treason and to seize them in the House of Commons, sent a thrill of fierce excitement through the partizans of the parliament, including the majority of the gentry in this county. From Essex, as from some other counties, there went up a petition—or rather, under the circumstances, it might be called a declaration—promising to stand firmly and die in defence of the privileges of parliament. Colchester gave more unsavoury vent to its feelings. The Rev. Erasmus Laud, the rector of Little Tey, was treated by the inhabitants with great cruelty, for no other offence than being of the same name as the Archbishop of Canterbury; and when Sir John Lucas was preparing a little band of horsemen to join the king—who, finding London unsafe, had fled to the north—the populace rose and arrested him. The mother and wife of the royalist knight were treated with much barbarity; his house in St. John's was plundered; even the ashes of his ancestors, which lay in the church of St. Giles's, were not allowed by the savageness of party zeal to remain undisturbed in their sepulchral resting place; and Sir John, with his chaplain, the Rev. T. Newcomer, rector of Holy Trinity, were carried off prisoners to London. On the whole, however, Essex suffered little at this period from these assertions of mob supremacy. A declaration of parliament in 1642 states that in various parts large bodies of the people assembled together, much damnified the houses, and took the goods without law or authority; but Essex, owing to the measures taken, was free from "the dreadful calamities, the cruel plunderings and ravages, the murders and bloody battles, which brought the rest of the kingdom almost to the brink of destruction."

## CHAPTER XV.

FORMATION OF THE EASTERN ASSOCIATION—RAISING OF MONEY AND MEN FOR THE PARLIAMENT—LETTERS OF CROMWELL—PRINCIPLES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PURITANS—SEIZURE OF THE ESTATES OF THE ESSEX ROYALISTS—CROMWELL AT SAFFRON WALDEN.

**W**HILE the clouds of civil war continued to gather, and long after the storm had broken, there was little bloodshed and but few outrages in Essex. A beautiful painted window at the east end of Chelmsford church, the work of a great master, was destroyed by a tumultuous mob of Puritans on the 5th of Nov. 1641, because it was thought to partake too much of a popish character. It contained the crucifixion, the virgin, and the ascension; but had been spared in the execution of the Parliamentary ordinance for the removal of all scandalous and superstitious pictures from the churches. Dr. Michelson, the rector, was cruelly treated for endeavouring to save this precious work of art from the barbarianism of blind religious zeal. A few other similar demonstrations of popular feeling occurred; but upon the whole the public peace was maintained and property respected. The reason of this was that the county was in the hands of the parliamentary party, whose activity and attitude were sufficient to repel all the hopes of the royalists in this quarter, and the local leaders possessed that influence which subdued the public feeling into order. The majority of the land-owners and chief inhabitants sided almost from the first with the House of Commons; and when that body placed the command of its forces under the Earl of Essex, and Charles collected his friends and planted his standard at Nottingham, Essex entered into a league with Suffolk, Norfolk, Hertford, and Cambridge, by which these counties engaged to aid, succour, and assist one another in mutual defence and preservation, and to suppress all rapines and plunderings. The lord lieutenant and deputy lieutenants were active in this movement. The trained bands were called out, organized, and officered. Arms were provided. Large subscriptions were made for the support of this system of self protection, which happily was found so effective against the rabble and the robber who elsewhere committed devastation and spoil under the cover of patriotism. In this way was constituted the formidable body called the "Eastern Association for the Parliament;" and the first committee, appointed in 1642, to carry out its views in this county,

consisted of Sir Thos. Barrington, Sir Richard Everard, Sir Harbottle Grimston, Sir Thos. Honywood, Sir William Masham, Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir Martin Lumley, and H. Holcroft, William Martin, and ~~Joseph~~ Sayer, Esqrs. It must not, however, be presumed from this that Essex stood passively upon the defensive in the great struggle which upset the throne and covered the fair face of the land with the desolation of war. Its wealth and its blood, too, were freely poured out for the sustainment of the strife. From its halls went forth many a devoted and gallant loyalist to join the standard of the king. From its towns and cottage hearths marched companies and bands of recruits to swell the forces of the puritans—those stern warriors who, with too much of the phraseology of cant upon their lips, had yet an earnest enthusiasm in their hearts, which made the push of their pikes irresistible in battle.

The Eastern Association could not long remain idle at a time when “each county, each town, each family, was divided within itself,” and fiercely excited by the events of the war. That body, as it was probably intended to be, became a powerful instrument for the support of the Parliament—a seed-bed for its soldiers, and a grand recruiting depot, to which Cromwell, after he had appeared upon the scene as a military leader, was in the habit of flying after every defeat. On the issuing of the order “for the weekly raising of money towards the maintenance of the army and forces by an assessment upon every county,” the large sums exacted appear to have been readily paid in Essex. At first the charge amounted to £1,105 a week; then it was increased to £1,678; and at one period it amounted to £6,750 a month. But beyond this, voluntary offerings were poured in largely, particularly at the commencement of the war. Beauty stripped itself of its ornaments, and women even gave up their silver thimbles to assist in putting down the pretensions of the king. Presents of plate and other property were sent for a like purpose from Essex; and the county committee wrote urgently to quicken the liberality of the boroughs. The following is their letter to the mayor and aldermen of Colchester:—

“Gentlemen,—Wee have acquainted the Parliament with your extraordinary Care and Pains in advancing the Propositions for the raisinge of horse, armes, money, and plate for the kinge, Parliament, and kingdome; how well your services are accepted of and what thanks we are enjoined to give yourselves and the rest of the gentlemen, freeholders and others of your towne for your zeales therein, and how faire they have engaged themselves for the protection and defence of the county; the order of both Houses of Parliament will better speake it than our letter, and for your better satisfactions, to that wee must for the present referre, which Mr. Grimeston will acquaint you with. The perfectinge of that worke begunne by you with soe great affection, and wherein you have mett



with soe much incouragement both from the Parliament and people is the occasion of this letter. And in the first place wee are commanded to desire yee to send away the money and plate subscribed for with all the speede yee can. And likewise to give particular notice to them that have ingaged themselves for the findinge of horses, to bring them upp to London, where there is order taken for the present inrollinge and vallueinge of them. Many Lords doe want horse, to make upp their troupes, and the service and safety of the kingdome doe much depend uppon your activitie and dispatch herin, which wee have cause to bee very confident of. And soe with the remembrance of our kindest respects, &c. we rest your assured lovinge friends.

Aug. 22nd, 1642.

Tho. Barrington, Mart. Lumley, Henry Mildmay,  
Wm. Masham, Har. Grimeston."

In October of the same year the following order of the Parliamentary Committee was sent to Essex:—

"28 Octob. 1642.—Whereas the Lords and Commons in Parliament have chosen the Earl of Warwicke Generalle of the forces now to be raised in the citie of London and adjacent countyes for the service of the king and Parliament, six thousand whereof are immediatelie to be sent to his Excellencie the Earle of Essex: and in regard of the season of the yeare they cannot well march on foote, nor do that service that otherwise they might if they were horsed. It is therefore ordered, that the maior and aldermen of Colchester, the bailiffs and townsmen of Chemsford, Malden, Braintree, Bocking, Coxhall, Dunmow, Dedham, in the county of Essex: and also the bailiffs and townsmen of Ipswich, Woodbridge, Edmundsbury, Framingham, Saxmundham, in the countie of Suffolke, shall forthwith procure and raise in the said severall townes, and other places adjacent, two thousand horse for dragooners, or as manie as possibly they may, for the service aforesaid, and with all possible speed to send them up to London unto Thomas Browne, grocer, and Maximilian Beard, Girdler, by us appointed to list horses for the service aforesaid; which horses so sent up shall be valued by the commissaries appointed for that purpose; and satisfaction shall be made to the several owners, according to the propositions of monie, plate, and raising horses, &c. &c.

"Subscribed by Northumberland, Warwick, Pembroke, W. Say and Seal, Wharton, Jno. Pym, Gilbert Gerrard, Anthony Nicholl."

Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir Thos. Honywood, and the other committee-men, in calling upon the boroughs and the high constables to put this order in force, were very urgent in their language. "Ye are all hereby desired," said they, "for God's sake, and as you tender the safety of your lives, estates, and that which is dearest of all, your religion, and the government of this kingdom, to execute the warrant with all possible expedition, wherein we are confident no good subject or honest christian will be wanting." The horses were sent up, and the Parliamentary leaders complimented the activity of the county.

In the first conflict of the forces at Edgehill, Sir Faithful Fortescue, a name familiar in Essex, who had been compelled to serve in the Parliamentary army, went over with his men to Prince Rupert, and greatly contributed to the success which the royalists then obtained. When the king and his forces entered Middlesex, and spread consternation through those who then held London, the militia force and the volunteers

were summoned to the rescue of the metropolis by the following pressing appeal:—

“All you of the county of Essex that are well affected to the parliament and citty of London; know, that the king’s army, under the pretence of peace and accommodation, are marchyng upp within seven myles of London, and are now in fight with my Lord of Essex, and intends to surprize the citty this night; you are therefore desired with all possible speed, as you tender your religion, lives, and liberties, repair forthwith with your trained bands and volentiers to the citty of London, to defend the parliament, citty, yourselves, and the kingdome, against our enimys, to be commanded by his Excellency the Earle of Warwick.”

Subscribed by

Isaac Pennington, Major; Henry Mildmay, Tho. Atkin, John Wollaston, John Towse, John Fowke, William Gibbs, and four more.—London, 12th Nov., 1642.—(With trembling hands, and in a great hurry.)

This cry of distress from the trembling leaders was answered by the despatch of forces from the county; and Colchester also sent up a company under a Captain Langley, supplied with £285. 10s., furnished from the pockets of the inhabitants for the pay and maintenance of the men for thirty days.

Victory for a time hovered around the royal arms in the west; and when, in 1643, Bristol had been taken, and Gloucester was closely besieged, the parliament fell back upon the Eastern Association for aid. The Earl of Manchester received a commission to that body, for the purpose of raising an army; and recruiting by means of impressment—a power which the parliament had formerly abolished as hateful, but now revived for its own purpose—commenced vigorously in the county. Colchester again sent forth its complete company to the rendezvous, under the same Captain Langley; but liberal as it had been in support of the rebellion, and though the historian says of the town, “Few friends had the poor king here,” it did not on this occasion provide very handsomely for the sustenance of the soldiers. Cromwell hereupon addressed this pleading and half reproachful letter to the corporation:—

“Gentlemen.—Upon the cominge downe of your townsmen to Cambridge, Capt. Langlie, not knowinge how to dispose of them, desired mee to nominate a fitt captaine, which I did, an honest, religious, valiant gentleman, Captain Dods-worth, the bearer heereof. Hee hath diligently attended the service, and much improued his men in their exercise, But hath beene unhappie beyond others, in not receauinge any pay for himself, and what hee had for his souldiers is out longe agoe. Hee hath by his prudence, what with fayre and winninge carriage, what with monie borrowed, kept them together. Hee is able to do soe noe longer; they will presently disband if a course bee not taken; itt’s pittye it should bee soe, for I belieue they are brought into as good order as most companies in the armie. Besid’s, at this instant there is great neede to vse them, I havinge receaued a special comand from my Lord Generall to aduance with what force wee can to putt an ende (if it may bee) to this worke (God soe assistinge) from whome all helpe cometh. I beseech you therefore consider this, gentle-

men, and the soldiers, and if itt bee possible, make up his companie a hundred and twenty, and send them away with what expedition is possible; itt may (through God's blessinge) proue very happie; one month's pay may proue all your trouble. I speake to wise men, God direct you. I rest, yours to serve you,  
**OLIVER CROMWELL.**"

Directed to the Maior of Colchester and Captain John Langley, March 23rd, 1642-3.

In the course of the year, apprehension was felt that the royal army was about to direct its march to this district, and the Earl of Essex artfully made use of it to quicken the arming and draw forth the contributions of the county. He addressed a letter to the "Gentlemen, Freeholders, and other well affected People," assuring them of the assistance of his army, and his earnest desire to help them, and calling upon "men of religious lives and affections to bear arms for the truth of their religion,—men of estates to defend their estates, the employment not being too mean for the best men." Another letter of the Earl's to those who had assumed to rule over public affairs in Essex was as follows:—

"Gentlemen.—The design now resolved upon for the kingdomes service, for the advance of the army, is of that concernment that I thought good to desire your assistance, in causing all the inhabitants of your countie, according to my warrant sent to your High Constables, presently with what armes, clubbs, and other instruments of warre, to march forthwith, and to appoint a common rendezvous at Chesham in Buckinghamsh., and to bring a month's pay in their purses, and let them not doubt, but they shall have the assistance of the armie, and of what commanders and officers for their succour in this design is fitt. I expect your furtherance by the power you have in the county, and that you see the warrants executed by those whome it concernes, and use your endeavours to make a generall rising, and that you take notice of all those that shall refuse or discourage the worke; it being now a time wherein is necessary to be known who are friends to the kingdome, and who are not: soe, noe waie doubting of your encouraging this service, I rest

*May 29th, 1643.*

**ESSEX.**

Cromwell, too, especially tried the effect of his pen—which he, however, always wielded clumsily, and in strange contrast to his dexterity with the sword—upon the inhabitants of Colchester, on whom his name began to have some influence. He wrote to the burgesses of that ancient borough this characteristic epistle:—

"Gent.—I thought it my duty once more to write unto yow for more strength to be speedily sent unto us for this great service; I suppose yow heare of the great defeat given by my L. Fairfax to the Newcastle Forces at Wakefield; it was a great mercy of God to us, and had it not bin bestoune upon us at this very present, my Lo. Fairfax had not knowne how to have subsisted; we assure yow, should the force we have miscarry, expect nothing but a speedy march of the enemy up unto yow; why yow should not strengthen us to make us subsist, judg yow the danger of the neglect, and how inconvenient this improvidence or unthrifty may be to yow; I shall never write but according

to my judgment, I tell yow againe it concernes yow exceedingly to be perswaded by me : My Lor. Newcastle is near 6000 foot and about 60 troopes of horse : My Lo. Fairfax is about 3000 foot and 9 troopes of horse ; and we have about 24 troopes of horse and Draggooners : The enemy drawes more to the Lo. Fairfax ; our motion and yours must be exceeding speedy, or else it will doe yow noe good at all ; if yow send let your men come to Boston. I beseech yow hasten the supply to us : forgett not monie. I presse not hard, though I doe see need that I assure yow the foot and Draggooners are ready to mutiny : lay not too much upon the back of a poore Gentl., who desires without much noyse to lay downe his life, and bleed the last dropp to serve the Cause and yow : I aske not your monie for myselfe, if that were my end and hope (viz. the pay of my place) I would not open my mouth at this time. I desire to denie myselfe, but others will not be satisfied : I beseech yow hasten supplies. Forget not your prayers.

“ Gent., I am yours,

“ May 28, 1643.

“ OL. CROMWELL.”

Again and again did Essex send forth its sons, at the call of the Eastern Association, to battle against the sovereign. When the fierce covenanters of Scotland brought their forces over the border, the parliament, encouraged by this aid, made immense efforts to crush the royal cause. Money was exacted by the most violent measures,—forced loans being amongst the expedients resorted to for this purpose—and many in this county were squeezed, or rather robbed, by this engine of oppression. The following is a specimen of the kind of persuasion used in the process. It is a letter to Wm. Lingwood, Esq., the owner of Stisted Hall, from whom the family of Savill Onley, Esq., inherit the estate :—

“To Mr. Lingwood, of Braintree.—April 22, 1644.—Whereas the summe of two hundred thousand pound is to be paid to our brethren of Scotland, for their assistance in this warre, for the speedy raising whereof some course by ordinance of both houses is already taken, for the forcing of those to lend thereunto who shall not doe it willingly, and further course will be taken therein. And whereas we are informed that you are able to lend towards this service the summe of ten pounds. And whereas those who shall willingly lend are the first to be paid, these are to desire you to manifest your good affection to the businesse, so that which will be most for your advantage, being loath to execute the said ordinance upon any without absolute necessity : we desire your answer by this bearer, and that the summe of ten pounds may be paid within eight days after your receipt of this present, unto Mr. Robert Aylett, at his house in Braintree, &c.

Mr. Lingwood yielded to this pressure, and the money was paid to John Wade, glover, of Little Waltham. An army, too, of 14,000 men was raised in the district. These forces appeared under Cromwell on the field of Marston Moor. Sir John Lucas, of Shenfield, and his cavalier friends, were ranged on the opposite side, under the banner of the fiery Rupert ; and thus the weapons of Essex men were savagely directed against each other—a sad illustration of the character of this unholy strife. After this battle, Cromwell, who had been wounded, finding his forces

crippled by the victory, returned to the Eastern Association, and received further succours, which, after the success of the royal arms at Cropedy Bridge, materially assisted in crushing the hopes of the king at the second battle of Newbury. The sending forth of these contributions of money and streams of men to assist in bringing down the throne and battering the church, was greatly accelerated by the zeal and activity of those whom the county had sent to the long parliament—Sir Martin Lumley and Sir Wm. Masham for the county; Sir Harbottle Grimston, and J<sup>r</sup>. Sayer, Esq., for Colchester; Sir Henry Mildmay, and John Porter, Esq., for Maldon; Sir Thos. Cheke and Sir John Jacobs for Harwich; though some of them stopped short on perceiving the confusion and the mournful results to which desecrated freedom led, and were amongst the expelled when the Commons was purged by force of those who had a spark of loyalty or conscience left.

In the wild religious saturnalia which ensued upon the abolition of the royal authority and the episcopal system, strange scenes were enacted and strange doctrines taught in the venerable old Essex churches. In some cases the military uniform superseded the surplice. Amongst others, the Rev. Samuel Keene, the vicar of Leyton, became a captain in the parliamentary army, and preached in his church in a buff coat. The clergy who refused to fall in with the current of religious eccentricity were, with their families, turned out—one half of them throughout the kingdom—to beggary and starvation; and their places were supplied by enthusiasts and violent preachers, upon whom the political leaders much relied for swaying the people into approval of their designs. The Presbyterian system was at first established. In accordance with the plan of the then dominant party of religionists in the parliament, the bishops were voted defunct, and the country was divided into districts ruled over by a body of ministers and elders, under the superintendence of a provincial body of clergymen, which in turn was subject to the authority of the national assembly. An Essex man was a chief instrument in inaugurating this system. The Rev. Stephen Marshall, the vicar of Finchingfield, an active promoter of the rebellion against the king, and a fierce opponent of episcopacy, became one of the most famous Presbyterian ministers, was selected as a member of the assembly of divines, and had a principal hand in framing the Directory, which was to supersede the Book of Common Prayer. So venerated was he amongst his party that when he died he was buried in Westminster Abbey; but on the restoration, his bones, with those of others, were cast out as unworthy of so honoured a resting place.

Although, however, something like a system of ecclesiastical government was at the outset established, it did not long retain an effectively controlling power. Doctrines and discourses were "fashioned to the varying hour," and the whims and humours of preachers and congregations. The code of christianity was broken into fragments. Here the fierce Presbyterian, claiming for his system divine origin and right, thundered forth his anathemas against all who differed from him, and denounced toleration as a national sin. In the next parish, the Independent, though not less wild and violent, was disposed to allow to others the freedom of conscience he claimed for himself. In a third, the Millenarian demanded that government itself should cease, and all human power be laid in the dust, as a foundation for the dominion of Christ. Some declared against a priesthood, others against the obligations of moral and natural law. All, however, united in denouncing the sports and pastimes and enjoyments to which the people had been accustomed, as connected with the licentiousness of manners. The parliament gave its sanction to this feeling, and a gloomy fanaticism pervaded the land. The maypole, which stood upon every village green in the county—

"The pole hung round with garlands gay,  
The young ones footing it away,  
The aged cheering their old souls,  
With recollections and their bowls—"

was cut down and cast into the fire as an emblem of frivolity, and a sinful misleader of souls. Horse racing was placed in the black catalogue of the greatest enormities. Christmas, whose jolly face is so heartily welcomed at every Essex hearth, was treated as a sensual intruder; and there is no doubt that if he had been an actual impersonation, instead of being enthroned on the hearth amidst the crackling of the log and the flashing of the fire-light, he would have been sent to bridewell or placed in the stocks as an idle vagabond. As it was, all the festive enjoyments and pleasant feelings that usually hover around him were prohibited, and the 25th of December was made a solemn fast-day. War was especially declared against mince pies. The Puritans considered their flavour as profane and superstitious, and a remnant of Paganism, if eaten at Christmastide; though it is recorded that "at other times they agreed very well with their stomachs;" and with all their affected austerity, and their continual talk of the next world, they loved the roast and boiled and the good things of this, as much as any of the gay and careless cavaliers of the court, or the rotund monks who in previous centuries had gathered round the refectory tables.



The Essex committeemen were not slow in taking the hint conveyed in the close of the letter of the Earl of Essex for attacking the property of the royalists—the Delinquents and the Malignants, as they were called in the phrase of the day. The estates of all those in the county who were suspected of a feeling for the king, who refused the demands made on them, or who desired to stand aloof from this wretched scene of confusion and strife, were seized upon as fair spoil, and applied to the support of the parliament. A fifth part only of the sequestered property was allowed for the support of the wives and families of the expelled owners. Many who before held good positions in the county were thus reduced to dire distress; others were totally ruined. After a time, however, those who had been thus robbed of their estates were permitted to redeem them, but only on payment of fines that were almost equal to the re-purchase. A list of fifty-two proprietors of property in Essex, who thus submitted to regain possession of their ancient inheritances, rather than allow them to pass entirely away from their families, has been preserved, and their names show the parties who were most compromised in this time of trouble. Amongst them are Sir Henry Audely, of Berechurch, who paid £1,600; Sir Benj. Ayloff, of Braxted, £2,000; Sir Thos. Bendish, a prisoner in the Tower, £1,000; the Rev. Mr. Browning, of Maldon, £818; Lord Capel, £4,706; John Fanshawe, of Parslows, £250, with £40 per annum settled; Thos. Fanshawe, of Jenkins, £500, with £80 per annum settled; John Freeman, of Chelmsford, for his wife, who appears to have been a Malignant, £16, and for himself £108. 15s.; Thos. Gardner, of West Ham, £120; John Green, of Epping, £200; Dame Ann Harris, of Writtle; £1,642. 8s.; Sir John Lucas, of Shenfield, £3,684; Adrian May, of Little Dunmow, £252; Sir Humphry Mildmay, of Danbury, £1,275; Henry Nevell, of Cressing Temple, £6,000; Thos. Rock, of Mountnessing, £372; Sir Denner Strutt, of Little Warley, £1,350; and Sir John Tyrell, of East Horndon, £600. Anthony Bocket, of Willingale, paid only £1, and Wm. Turner, of Saffron Walden, £1. 10s. The total sum thus exacted in the county amounted to £34,113. 4s. 4d. Throughout the kingdom these compositions, and the value of the estates which remained unredeemed, brought millions into the coffers of the parliament.

Essex at length began to grow jealous of the military power which it had done so much, by contributions, recruiting, and confiscation, to establish. In the first movement of that mutiny which broke the power of the parliament, gave the king to the executioner, and placed Cromwell at the head of



affairs as an arbitrary dictator, the soldiers complained in their remonstrance that "while petitions from Essex and other places were openly encouraged against the army, their mouths were stopped." The head quarters of the army were at this time at Saffron Walden, the soldiers having suddenly, at the instigation of the Independents, broken up the cantonments at Nottingham and marched to Essex; and to this place Cromwell, one of the secret abettors of the disaffection, was despatched with others to enquire into "the cause of these distempers." In this corner of Essex, it may be concluded from his conduct, he began to work into practicable shape the vision of supreme power which had probably before then presented itself to his mind dimly and confused. Instead of repressing the discontent he encouraged it. In the camp at Walden, by his suggestion, was formed the military parliament which ultimately rendered that of Westminster a nullity. Here the seizure of the king was determined on; and from hence issued the secret directions to Joyce, the tailor, who, with his 500 horse, executed that bold act of the future Protector's policy. The royal captive, however, was not brought into Essex. Before his arrival the army had shifted to Triplow, in Cambridgeshire, where a general rendezvous took place to give greater effect to its demands; and, in spite of the subsequent dissimulation of Cromwell, the circumstances justify the suspicion that when the resolution to secure the person of the king was formed in the camp at Walden, there was, in the minds of the chiefs, some grim idea of the ghastly scene at Whitehall.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### WITCHCRAFT IN ESSEX—TRIALS OF TWENTY WITCHES AT CHELMSFORD—THE MALDON WITCHES.

**F**OR several succeeding years the further current of political events had little connexion with Essex; but a horrid episode of judicial murders fills up the chasm. At this period there was a universal belief in witchcraft. There always has been, and there always will be, a feeling of superstition in the untaught mind—it might almost be called a morbid power of imagination, peopling the bye-way and the want-side with ghosts, and attributing to the supernatural agency of evil spirits whatever ill and disaster it cannot from its own limited knowledge clearly understand. Superstition is in fact the twin sister of Ignorance, and they have always

dwelt together. But in this case men of deep learning, men of science, minds trained to stern reasoning upon proved facts, gave credence and fatal support to the errors of the vulgar. Witchcraft was treated as a hideous crime, punishable with death; and the Puritans were particularly zealous in putting into force the laws against it. Three thousand persons were burnt on these accusations during the Commonwealth; and it is computed that thirty thousand perished in this kingdom for a crime which is now considered as impossible. The detection of offenders of this class grew into a regular profession. Essex had a witchfinder of great repute—Mathew Hopkins, of Manningtree; and the gross impostor and perjurer was sent for far and near to bring to justice those whom the weak-minded chose to suspect or enmity had determined to destroy. For the exercise of his art he was well rewarded, and he fattened upon the blood of the poor decrepit old creatures he brought to the scaffold and the stake. His skill, he says, he gained by long experience, and his first initiation into the diabolical craft was in this manner—"In March, 1644, he had some seven or eight of that horrible sect of witches living in the town where he lived, a town in Essex, called Manningtree, with divers other adjacent witches of other towns, who every six weeks, in the night (being always on the Friday night), had their meeting close by his house, and had their several solemn sacrifices there offered to the devil, one of which this discoverer heard speaking to her imps one night, and bid them go to another witch, who was thereupon apprehended and searched by women who had for many years known the devil's marks, and found to have three teats about her, which honest women have not." He is styled "gent." in the depositions; he kept a regular pack of witch hunters, with three horses for their use; and his charge for drawing a witch covert was 20s.

In 1645 this man had cast his net widely over Tendring Hundred, and the Earl of Warwick, the high sheriff, assisted by various justices of the county, held a court at Chelmsford to try the victims he had caught. Convictions and burnings for witchcraft had not been uncommon. It was a crime which appeared as regularly, and it was thought as naturally, upon the calendar, as that of murder or horse stealing. But on this occasion there was a complete battue of witches, all of them old women, raked up from the villages of the county. Twenty-five were dragged to the bar and indicted for holding direct communion with the devil, entertaining and nourishing imps, and by their instrumentality working mischief upon the cattle and persons of their neighbours. What a piteous sight does it ap-

pear at the present day to contemplate that group of helpless and infirm old women hobbling into the dock of the Essex shire-house, mumbling words of fear through their toothless gums and withered lips, called upon to answer with their lives for every threatening word, and committed to the flames on the faith of village gossip. Yet justice was so proud of the proceeding, and the massacre which followed, that an official account was published, wherein it was stated "the several murders and devilish witchcrafts committed on the bodies of men, women, and children, and divers cattle, are fully discovered."

The evidence taken in all these cases was very similar. It was generally of the most frivolous character, and such as would not now be held sufficient to justify the infliction of a 5s. fine upon a poacher. To be old, and ugly, and ill-tempered were strong grounds of suspicion. To have an enemy who had died suddenly, or a neighbour afflicted with some strange disorder, especially if a small wen or wort (which were the teats the imps were supposed to suck) was found on the body of the accused, were taken as conclusive proofs of guilt. The Essex witches, upon the whole, appear to have been very common place creatures. There was nothing romantic about their mischief. They mixed no deadly pottage—they bid no "hell-broth boil and bubble" in the dark cave, or beneath the gibbet, or on the wild heath, with mysterious incantations—they saddled and bridled no broomsticks for equestrian excursions amongst the clouds. They were all charged with being actuated by feelings of paltry spite, and few are alleged to have derived any pecuniary profit from their diabolical deeds. The most extraordinary circumstance, however, in these cases was that some of the victims confessed all that was charged against them—pleaded guilty, in fact, and minutely described their familiars and the manner in which their spiriting was done. It can only be accounted for by the supposition that they were imbecile or insane, terrified and bewildered by the pompous array of justice, or, weak and ignorant in mind, half believed in the supernatural power attributed to them, and were really proud of it. In some cases the confessions were extracted by torture. The accused was worn and wearied out by watchers, who studiously prevented her from sleeping three or four nights in succession. She was walked about till her feet blistered. Some were buffeted, "misused, sported and abused by the mob." Others were subjected to the test of swimming, according to the rule laid down by King James in his book on demonology, that "witches deny their baptism when they covenant with the devil, and

water being the sole element thereof, therefore when they be heaved into the water, the water refuseth to receive them into its bosom, and suffers them to float."

The court was opened on the 29th of July, and the first arraigned was Rebecca Jones, of St. Osyth, who was charged with murder by means of her subtle arts. The only evidence against her was her own. She described the manner in which she was initiated into the mysteries of witchcraft. Some twenty-five years before, she said, when she was a buxom servant-maid to one John Bishop, of Great Clacton, there came to the door "a very handsome young man, as she then thought him, but now she thinks it was the devil, who asked this examinant how she did, and desired to see her left wrist, and that he then took a pin from this examinant's own sleeve, and pricked her wrist twice, and there came out a drop of blood, which he took off with the tip of his finger, and so departed." About three months after, as she was going to St. Osyth with her basket of butter, she met a man in a ragged suit, having such great eyes that she was afraid of him, and he gave her three things like to moles, having four feet apiece, but no tails, and of a black colour, telling her to nurse them and feed them with milk, and they would avenge her on her enemies. These were her imps; and their names were Margaret, Annie, and Susan. To test their powers she sent one of them to kill a sow of Benjamin Howes's, of Little Clacton; and afterwards she despatched another, in company with one sent by Joyce Boanes, to kill Thos. Bumstead, of Great St. Osyth, who had beaten her boy for eating his honey, and he died in about three weeks after. Another of the imps, under her directions, soon after killed the widow, and the third sorely afflicted the child. On this statement, which at the present day would have consigned the prisoner to the county lunatic asylum, she was sent to the stake, and burnt at Chelmsford.

Elizabeth Clarke, of Manningtree, was called, and there hobbled to the front of the bar on crutches a decrepit old woman with one leg, long bent and bowed and wrinkled by poverty and years. Do my Lord of Warwick and the learned justices of the law, sitting there in solemn ermine, believe that poor palsied hand now raised before them has lifted up the awful veil of the invisible world and bound the spirits of evil to do its bidding? Yes, they do believe it. The indictment is read, and the poor hag is called upon to plead to the charge. She had been apprehended because a cunning woman named Hovye, of Hadleigh, had told John Rivet, a tailor of Manningtree, that his wife, who was afflicted with fits, was cursed by two women,

one of whom dwelt above his house and the other beneath it, whereupon he believed she was bewitched by the prisoner, who happened to live at the top of the hill. This was the *prima facie* case. To establish the actual guilt, Hopkins the witchfinder spoke to strange and horrible statements made by the prisoner when he and others were watching her by night in her own house, "for the better discovery of her wicked practices." Amongst other things she told him she had been very intimate with the devil for the last seven years. He came in the night three or four times in the week in the shape of a very proper gentleman, with a laced band, knocked at the door, on which she got up and let him in, and he stopped and slept with her. Further, she offered to call one of her white imps and play with it in her lap; and "within a quarter of an hour," the same deposition proceeds, "there appeared an imp like to a dog, which was white, with some sandy spots, and seemed to be very fat and plump, with very short legs, which forthwith vanished away; and the said Elizabeth said the name of that imp was Jarmara. And immediately there appeared another imp, which she called Vinegar Tom, in the shape of a greyhound, with long legs. And the said Elizabeth then said that the next imp should be a black imp, and should come for Master Sterne, which appeared, but presently vanished. And the last that appeared was in the shape of a polecat, but the head somewhat bigger." Altogether she entertained a brood of five imps, besides two of the old beldame West's, which occasionally visited her; and as these guests were supposed to suck the blood of their employers, according to the confession, the prisoner and the said Annie West supported them in common. The only actual mischief alleged against this culprit was killing by her spells the hogs of Mr. Edwards, and the horse of Robert Taylor, of Manningtree. Having proved the confession, the witchfinder proceeded to eke out his evidence with a little sporting episode, intending the court to infer that the devil had interposed and endeavoured to terrify him out of the prosecution. We give the passage as a specimen of the sort of evidence which grave judges received in these cases. "Going home," he said, "from the house of the said Mr. Edwards to his own house about nine or ten of the clock that night, with his greyhound with him, he saw the greyhound suddenly give a jump, and ran as she had been in full course after a hare; and that when this informant made haste to see what his greyhound so eagerly pursued, he espied a white thing about the bigness of a kitlyn, and the greyhound standing aloof from it; and that bye and bye the said white imp or kitlyn danced about the said

greyhound, and by all likelihood bit off a piece of flesh of the shoulder of the greyhound; for the greyhound came shrieking and crying to this informant with a piece of flesh torn from her shoulder. And this informant further saith, that coming into his own yard that night, he espied a black thing, proportioned like a cat, only it was thrice as big, sitting on a strawberry bed, and fixing the eyes on this informant; and when he went towards it, it leaped over the pale towards this informant, as he thought, but ran quite through the yard, with his greyhound after it, to a great gate, which was underset with a pair of tumbril springs, and did throw the said gate wide open, and then vanished; and the said greyhound returned again to this informant, shaking and trembling violently." Doubtless the noble lord and his attendant justices shook their heads in horror at this awful tale of a dog hunting two stray cats; but though the recital excites a grim smile at the "wisdom of our forefathers," that piece of evidence was fatal to Elizabeth Clarke. It was clenched by four or five witnesses, who spoke to the appearance of the imps in the prisoner's house; and the prisoner, in her confession, which was taken in all due form on her committal by Sir Harbottle Grimston, M.P., and Sir Thos. Bowes, admitted she had a thing like a little kitlyn, which was given her by Annie West because it would fetch home victuals for her—and of course it was concluded this was the very imp the greyhound hunted. "Guilty" was the verdict, and death the doom pronounced upon her.

The next case was that of Elizabeth, the wife of Edward Gooding, for she had not attained the widowhood which seems to have been one of the usual qualifications of a witch, as if a husband was a protection against the arts of the evil one. She went to Robert Taylor, of Manningtree, who kept a grocer's shop, and asked him to trust her half a pound of cheese. He refused, and she went away, "muttering and mumbling to herself." The same night Master Taylor's horse was taken sick and lame, in a manner so strange that it baffled the skill of four farriers. The horse was quiet and cheerful in company, but when left alone he kicked and violently beat himself, and "the belly of the said horse would rumble and make a noise as a foul chimney on fire." In four days the animal died. This could be nothing less than the result of witchcraft. Master Taylor was "induced to believe that Elizabeth Gooding was the cause"—another witch had said she was—and upon this evidence alone she was ordered to be burnt.

In some of the other trials we have the veil drawn up from a



council of witches held at Manningtree, which appears to have been a hot bed of the black art, and a view is presented of their incantations and "charms of powerful trouble," though the proceedings of the weird sisters of Essex are not so dramatic as those of Macbeth. Ann Leech, of Mistley, Hellen Clark, Rebecca West, and Anne West, were charged with various deeds of murder and mischief about that district, and the following confessions were put in:—

"John Edes, clerk, on oath said,—Rebecca West confessed unto him, that about seven yeares since, she began to have familiaritie with the devill, by the instigation of her mother, Anne West, who hath appeared unto the said Rebecca at severall times in diverse shapes: at one time in the likeness of a proper young man, who desired of her that he might have the same familiaritie with her that others that appeared unto her before had had. Promising that if she would, he would then doe for the said Rebecca what shee desired, and avenge her on her enemies; but required further, that shee would deny God, and relie upon him. Now, there was one Thomas Hart, of Lawford, where the said Rebecca lived with her said mother, Anne West, and the said Rebecca told this informant that shee required of him that he would avenge her on the said Hart by killing his son, who not long after was taken sick, and dyed, whereupon the said Rebecca told this informant that shee conceived hee could do as God: after which time shee gave entertainment to him, and the said Rebecca further confessed to this informant, that whilst she lived at Rivenall, in the said county of Essex, the said Anne, her mother, came to the said Rebecca, and told her the barley corn was picked up (meaning one George Frances, the only son of one George Frances, one of the chief inhabitants of that town, where the said Anne West dwelt), and that his father thought the said George, his son, was bewitched to death; and the said Anne then said unto the said Rebecca, Be it unto him according to his faith.

"The confession of Rebecca West, taken before the said justices at Manningtree, the 21st March, 1645.—This examinant saith, that about a moneth since, the aforesaid Anne Leech, Elizabeth Gooding, Hellen Clark, Anne West, and this examinant met all together at the house of the aforesaid Elizabeth Clark, in Manningtree, where they together spent some time in praying unto their familiars, and every one in order went to prayers; afterwards some of them read in a book, the book being Elizabeth Clark's; and this examinant saith, that forthwith their familiars appeared, and every one of them made their severall propositions to those familiars what every one of them desired to have effected. And this examinant saith, that first of all the said Elizabeth Clark desired of her spirit that Mr. Edwards might be met withall about the middle bridge, as hee should come riding from Eastberyholt, in Suffolk; that his horse might be scared, and be thrown down and never rise again. And this examinant saith, that the said Elizabeth Gooding desired of her spirit that shee might be avenged on Robert Tayler's horse, for that the said Robert suspected the said Elizabeth Gooding for the killing of an horse of the said Robert formerly. And this examinant saith that the said Hellen Clark desired of her spirit that shee might be revenged on two hogs in Misley street (being the place where the said Helen lived), one of the hogs to die presently, and the other to be taken lame. And this examinant further saith, that Anne Leech desired of her spirit that a cowe might be taken lame, of a man's living in Manningtree, but the name of the man this examinant cannot remember. And this examinant further saith, that the said Anne West, this examinant's mother, desired of her spirit that she might be freed from all her enemies, and have no trouble. And this examinant saith, that she desired of her spirit that she might be revenged on Prudence, the wife of Thomas Hart,



and that the said Prudence might be taken lame on her right side. And lastly this examinant saith, that having thus done, this examinant and the other five did appoint the next meeting to be at the said Elizabeth Gooding's house, and so departed all to their owne houses."

Corroborative proofs of the effects of this witch gathering were readily forthcoming. Master Edwards's horse, it was sworn, startled and stumbled at the bridge, but he was too good a horseman to be upset by Satan. He kept his seat unharmed; and as he rode off he "heard something about his horse cry 'Ah, Ah,' much like the shriek of a polecat"—the imps' wail of vexation at being thus baffled by equestrian skill. Mathew Hopkins, too, who was in these trials for witchcraft as high a professional authority as Dr. Swaine Taylor is now in cases of poisoning, was called in; and he spoke to a confession made while the prisoners were confined in Colchester Castle. The result was that Rebecca West escaped, but the others were all condemned.

Thus the sickening record of the superstitious ignorance of the time goes on. In case after case we have similar statements of frivolous circumstances—similar confessions, followed by the halter or the fagot. The evidence against Mary Greenlief was, that thirty years before her child had been heard to cry out in the night, and that a hare had been seen sitting opposite her door; and that on being searched there were found upon her body the usual signs of her having nourished imps. Mary Johnson, of Wivenhoe, had carried an imp in her pocket in the shape of a rat, and sent it through a hole in a door to rock a cradle; she had kissed a child and given it an apple, and it afterwards sickened with fits and died; and finally, Elizabeth Otley, the mother, was sorely afflicted with pains till she engaged in a scuffle with the witch and drew her blood, when forthwith the spell was dissolved, and she was well again. Margaret Moone, of Thorpe, carried on an extensive trade in witchcraft. She had twelve imps to do her bidding, and besides killing children and cattle, she stooped to the lower sport of spoiling batches of bread and brewings. In one case she sent a shower of vermin upon Margaret Rawbood, a tidy and cleanly woman, so that they could be swept off her clothes with a stick, because her husband had given 10s. more for a house from which she had been expelled. In several of the cases the wandering words of a writhing epileptic patient were taken as solemn proofs of guilt. Robert Turner, a carpenter of St. Osyth, had refused to give three old women a handful of chips; and shortly after, his servant man was taken sick, shaking and shrieking, crowing like a cock, barking like a dog, and "crying out of Rose

Hallybread that she had bewitched him." Rose was thereupon seized. Under the usual process she confessed to entertaining imps, feeding them on oatmeal, and suckling them on her body. Like several others, through the rigour of her tormentors, she died in the gaol. Throughout, the imps are described as solid material substances, requiring frequent nourishment; and they were observed passing to and fro wherever their deeds of darkness were to be done. Susan Cook received her two familiars as a legacy from her mother on her death-bed. One of them was like a mouse, and named Susan; the other was of a yellow colour, about the bigness of a cat, and was called Bessie. Jane Cooper entertained three of these visitants, two like mice, and one like a frog. Ann Cate, of Great Holland, received four imps from her mother—for this species of property often went by heirship—named James, Prickeare, Robyn, and Sparrow. In one instance the devil appeared in the shape of a white dog, and ate a mess of milk pottage; in another his business form was that of a rat; in another of a grey kite. Day after day the court sat listening to minute descriptions and nursery tales of this nature. The "verily believe" of the witness was sufficient to connect the accused with the most monstrous tale of murder by diabolical agency. Learned clergymen appeared in the box, amongst others the Rev. Joseph Long, of Clacton, to give the sanction of religion to ignorant ferocity. He detailed a confession made by Cooper as to the employment of her imps, and her sending one of them to assail a child of Gregory Rouse; the Rev. and credulous accuser adding that "to his own knowledge about the same time the said child was strangely taken sick, and languishing within a short time died." Sir Thomas Bowes assumed the double character of judge and witness, and violated all the now understood rules of evidence by relating from the bench, at second hand, a goblin story which he had heard "from an honest man who he knew would not speak an untruth," to the effect that passing the door of a reputed witch one morning he looked inquisitively in at the door, and was forthwith assailed by four black rabbits; and finding he could not kill them by blows of his stick, he seized one, "took the body of it in one hand and the head of it in another, and as he wrung and stretched the neck of it, it came out between his hands like a lock of wool." Drown the imps he could not, though he held them at arms' length in a stream, and at length they vanished into the air. Sad, indeed, and humbling to English law and human intellect, is the official record of these trials. Sadder still the judicial murders which followed. Of the accused, few escaped. Ten

were executed at Chelmsford; four were burnt at Manningtree on the 1st of August; one died on the way to execution, and two in gaol; and Mathew Hopkins boasts that through his instrumentality "in our hundred of Essex twenty-nine were condemned at once."

These human sacrifices to the Moloch of vulgar credulity were common before this period, and were continued long after. In 1579, three witches from Maldon were tried and executed at Chelmsford. One of them, Ellen Smith, whose mother had been burnt for the same crime, fell out with her father-in-law about some money, and sent an imp to torture him. But the sprite was slow and awkward at the work. It was seized, in the shape of a toad, with the tongs, thrust into the grate, and "it made the fire burn blue as azure," whereat the said Ellen Smith was in great pain, and came calling out at Eastwood's door. The prisoner was also accused of murdering by her spells the child of Widow Webb, of Maldon; and further, her own son deposed that "his mother did keep three spirits, whereof the one, called by her Great Dick, was enclosed in a wicker bottle; the second, named Little Dick, was put in a leather bottle; and the third, termed Willet, was kept in a wool-pack. The bottles and the pack were found, but the spirits were banished away." From the character of the case, and the story of the bottles, it is probable the imps had been born in the distillery—spirits which, even now, work as much mischief in the world as was attributed to the witches of old—and that the prisoner fell a victim to her own common-place joke.

It was not till the reign of George II. that witchcraft ceased to be recognized by the law as a crime. In the 9th year of that monarch an act was passed enacting that no prosecution should be instituted against any person for witchcraft, sorcery, or enchantment. The belief in witches still lingers faintly in some of the rural cottages of the county. The whole brood of imps, however, has vanished before the daylight of advancing education. They no longer walk the earth in visible shapes within the reach of the press or the sight of the village school. The witches who now work their potent spells are not the ugly and wrinkled and ignorant, but those of the bright eye, and peachy cheek, and polished mind; and the only flame to which we consign them is the flame of love.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## RISING OF THE ROYALISTS IN THE COUNTY—THE SIEGE OF COLCHESTER.

**W**HILE the leading and learned men of Essex were tying the death-noose around the necks of helpless old women, and kindling the funeral pyre of the living victims, the county continued to send its men and its money for the support of the Parliament; and at length the tide of civil war began to roll towards its borders. The work of confiscation went on; and the successful leaders of the dominant party took care to secure a share of the plunder. The mansion of New Hall, near Chelmsford, and the estates pertaining to it, were wrested from the young Duke of Buckingham, and were sold for the nominal sum of 5s. to Oliver Cromwell, who thus became an Essex landowner. The country committees could sequester and inflict corporal punishment without appeal or remedy; and they employed their power for the purposes of private vengeance. These measures of severity and selfishness, however, led to a renewal of the war. The people began to find that the tyranny of a hundred was more intolerable than that of one. The king had escaped from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight, and the invasion from Scotland, which followed, gave heart and hope to the royalists. They began to form fresh combinations, and to take measures for a renewal of the struggle. These events and this feeling led to that celebrated siege of Colchester, in which, before the walls of that town, a handful of royalists hastily collected so long held the veteran legions of Fairfax at bay. It is not, however, to be concluded that Colchester can lay claim to the credit of loyalty from this noble defence. The sympathy of the people was all with the enemy without. They had been from the first amongst the fiercest promoters of the rebellion; and though they had pleaded the pretence of poverty in order to evade the demand when asked for £400 by the king, they directly after poured in large voluntary contributions to Parliament, besides paying to it the sum of £30,177. 2s. 4½d. by direct assessment in the course of six years. There was, in May, 1648, a slight movement in Colchester in favour of fair and honourable treatment of the king, and the securing of that peace for which the land yearned; but the men who grappled with the foe in the suburbs, or met him at the beleaguered wall, had forced themselves in as unwelcome guests, with whose cause the governing power and the great majority of the townsfolk had no sympathy.

The movement which led to the siege originated in Kent. The grand jury of that county, assembled at Canterbury to try a case of riot, drew up a petition for redress of the grievances under which the nation groaned; and it was subscribed by numbers. This was denounced by the parliament as seditious; on which its authors and supporters resolved "to march with the petition in one hand, and a sword in the other." Accordingly they seized the magazines in the county, raised regiments, and mustered on Barham Downs with 7,000 foot, and an imposing force of cavalry, when the Earl of Norwich was proclaimed their general. They were, however, divided and scattered by Fairfax, who hurried against them with 6,000 foot and 2,000 cavalry. Part of the royalists reached Greenwich, where, hearing that the loyal flame was flickering up in Essex, 500 or 600 crossed the river at various points, some swimming their horses; and, beating back the forces of the Tower Hamlets, took post at Stratford. They met little encouragement from the inhabitants of that district. Meetings, some of them public, had indeed been held in the county, avowedly to promote the king's interest; but when the Earl of Norwich proceeded to Chelmsford, he found the party crude in resolve and hesitating as to the proper mode of action. The spirit of this noble was not adapted to inspire or lead a great enterprise. His nature, according to Clarendon, was more fitted for the convivial table than the stern work of the battle field. His presence, however, rallied the leaders. A council was held in Chelmsford; it was resolved to take up arms; the committeemen of the Parliament sitting in the town were seized, and narrowly escaped death; and a considerable body of royalists having been got together, they were placed under the command of Sir Charles Lucas, who marched to Brentwood. In that town a junction was formed with the Kentish forces, which, swelled by stray London apprentices, had marched from Stratford. This was on the 8th of June. On the following morning the force marched into Chelmsford, where it was joined by Lord Capel, Lord Loughborough, and others of station from Hertfordshire. Fifty others came in by way of Epping. In the afternoon a rendezvous was held in Cromwell's park of New Hall; and the gentlemen at the head of the movement met in council, when the resolve was taken of marching into the northern part of the county. News came that Fairfax, having crossed his army from Gravesend into Essex, was upon their track. Sir Thomas Honywood, of Marks Hall, a stout parliamentarian, had collected a strong body of horse and foot at Coggeshall, more formidable than the famous volunteers of a later day, and

barred the passage of the main road. At first it was proposed to attack him, but discretion prevailed; and accordingly the royal army, after quartering that night in Chelmsford, took the road next morning to Braintree. Halting at Leighs-house, the seat of the Earl of Warwick, they fared sumptuously upon the contents of his larder, and ransacking the armoury, carried off good store of arms and ammunition, with two brass field pieces. With Desborough, who had been sent forward by Fairfax, hovering upon their rear with his regiment of horse, and marking their route, they proceeded towards Braintree, which place they reached in the evening, somewhat to the consternation of the inhabitants of that democratic town, who must have been astonished to see the royal banner, raised from the dust, flaunting past their doors, with cavaliers praneing along the streets, and troops of "malignants" in warlike order. But, whatever might have been the current of opinion at the hearths of the householders, it did not show itself in presence of the pike; and quarters for the night were provided for the martial visitors. The next morning (Sunday) the whole force was drawn out to a field near the town, where prayers were solemnly read; and the remainder of the day was spent in organizing the force, and appointing to commands. At nine in the evening the troops left Braintree, and, marching all night to elude their pursuers, at about four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day appeared before Colchester, where their intention was to remain one or two days, that Sir Charles Lucas might exercise his local influence in recruiting the force. The inhabitants, however, acting on principle and prudence, were not disposed to receive within their walls such dangerous guests, who, says Morant drily, "are always best at a distance." The royalists therefore found the gates barred against them, and a troop of about sixty well-accountred horse drawn up in front, to hint that a hostile and not a hospitable reception was to be looked for in that quarter. Scouts, too, had been thrown out to the alms-houses beyond the turnpike, to give notice of the approach of the royalist enemy,—for this is clearly the light in which Colchester looked upon the advancing force. These scouts were driven in; and a skirmish ensued, in which one of the townsmen was killed. Sir Charles Lucas brought up two or three troops ready for the attack, and the martial spirit of the townsmen then oozed away. They entered into negotiation, and agreed to submit, on the promise that the town should not be plundered nor the inhabitants molested. On these conditions they opened the gates, gave up their horses and arms; and the royalists, about 4,000 strong, including 600 horse, marched



into the town under the command of Lord Goring (Earl of Norwich), Lord Capel, Sir Charles Lucas, Sir George Lisle, and various other gentlemen of Essex, Herts, and Kent.

In the mean time Fairfax was rapidly marching in the same direction, with a force composed of veterans of the army—men earnest in the cause and experienced in war. He was joined on his way by many of the Essex men, who looked upon this outbreak in favour of the fugitive king as a slur upon the county, and were ready to aid in punishing the hideous crime of loyalty. Sir Thos. Honywood came up with his 2,000 horse and foot; Colonel Henry Mildmay sent in a regiment of horse and two troops of dragoons; Major Sparrow four troops of horse; and Colonel Carew Mildmay part of a regiment of foot under Major Band. Thus reinforced by militiamen and volunteers, the pursuing army appeared upon Lexden Heath on the 13th of June—the morning after the royalists had found shelter in the town. From this spot Fairfax instantly addressed the following summons to the Earl of Norwich:—

"My Lord,—I am come hither with the Parliament's forces to reduce those under your command to the obedience of the Parliament. If your lordship and those under you will instantly lay down your arms, there may be a prevention of much blood that is like to be spilt, and the town preserved from plunder and ruine; the evil must lie upon you, if you refuse. I expect your present answer, and remaine, your servant, THO. FAIRFAX."

The reckless Earl replied to this message in scoffing style, informing the trumpeter who brought it he had heard General Fairfax was ill of the gout, but he "would cure him of all diseases." This wretched attempt at warlike wit was followed by a stream of blood. The soldiers of the Parliament were rendered savage by this tone of scoffing contempt. Finding this, and incensed by the personal insult, Fairfax ordered an immediate attack, and down from Lexden the war-cloud of steel and fire went rushing with fury towards the town. The royalists saw it coming. The guards in the suburbs were doubled. Colonel Fane, who had been Governor of Landguard Fort, but deserted to the royalists, sallied beyond the walls with a force to support them; and the first as well as the fiercest and most general conflict of the siege took place. The strife rolled along by St. Catherine's hospital and the Crouched Friars, up to Head-gate, the royalists gradually giving way, from failing ammunition and the loss of leaders—Sir William Champion and Colonel Cook having fallen in the first crash of the contending parties. In this onset, however, there flashed out in the defenders that enthusiastic daring and noble endurance which reflected such lustre on the later period of the siege. When forced back to the gates by overpowering numbers,



“who threw their shot upon them like hail,” a desperate effort became necessary to prevent the enemy entering with the guards, who had been ordered to retire within the walls. In the hottest of the fight, Lord Capel and other nobles of high distinction were seen charging with the pike along with the common soldiers; and so mingled were the combatants in the *melée*, that when Head-gate was shut, Lord Capel barely finding time to fasten it with his cane, numbers of the royalists were excluded and made prisoners. Encouraged by this success in the suburbs, the assailants rushed on to an attack on the town itself. Their efforts were directed against Head-gate. Shots were fired under it to wound the feet, and large stones thrown over to crush the heads, of the defenders. This failing, a brass-gun was brought to bear upon the gate. The high-ground within the walls, however, gave the royalists an advantage of which they skilfully availed themselves. From St. Mary's churchyard and the adjoining gardens there came so steady a stream of shot that the Parliamentarians suffered severely; and after maintaining the fight seven hours, till night came on, they set fire to some houses near the gate, in the vain hope that the flames would communicate to the town, and retreated in confusion. They killed, too, many of the poor weavers in the suburbs, and plundered their houses, although the class was known to be favourable to republican principles, and probably had trusted to this fact for security. Their gun was left behind—a trophy for the royalists; and 500 stand of arms, scattered about the scene, were gathered together the next morning and taken into the town. The loss of the assailants in this affair was little short of a thousand men. Their killed were rated by the royalists at 700,—by themselves at only 100, besides their wounded and prisoners. The defenders lost about 80 men; but 320 others were taken prisoners, with 26 gentlemen, some of them of military experience, whose services would have been valuable in leading and animating the half-fledged soldiery.

This battle at the gates was the prelude to the siege of the town—the prologue to the fearful drama of death at the walls, and starvation in the streets, ending with the cold-blooded butchery in the Castle-Bailey. Fairfax, baffled in the first wild rush which the insolence of his opponents had provoked, and finding he had caught the royalists as in a trap, set himself coolly down to secure his prey. Planting his main force at Lexden, thus cutting off retreat or succour in that direction, he blocked escape by the West Bergholt or Cambridge road with a strong detachment of horse; and, lest relief should come in

from seaward, a part of the navy having declared for the king, he seized upon and occupied the fort at Mersea Island. An hour after, a detachment of royalists, sent off on a like errand, arrived there. The place was thus hemmed in on all sides. A regular blockade and siege had been determined on; and Fairfax at once broke ground. The pick and the spade were set to work to eat their way up to the walls—a tedious process, which detained the parliamentary army nearly three months before a town which modern artillery, like that used at Sebastopol and Delhi, would have laid in ruins in a few hours. A fort and barricades were first thrown up at Lexden, to guard the head quarters and secure the highway; and after resting the men two days, a battery named “Essex Fort” was reared nearer to the town. Thus nightly advances were made, first up to the Hanging Field, and so on to every commanding spot; these redoubts and forts, as they successively grew up under the hands of the besiegers, being connected by regular trenches, and occupied by strong guards.

The royalists now began to understand the position in which they were placed. They had never contemplated occupying the town for more than a few days; but, says Matthew Carter, the quarter-master general of the little army, who wrote a diary of the siege, “march away now they could not without falling into a champaign country, where, the enemy being very strong, and they unavoidably weak in horse, would have cut them off in an instant; their foot being no such experienced soldiers as to maintain a charge of themselves against both horse and foot, without hedges to guard and shelter them.” Therefore they were compelled to defend “a place not fitting to be mantled or maintained as a garrison”—that is, according to military rules, indefensible; and that with a force composed principally of raw countrymen, only 2,500 of whom were well armed when they entered. They were in the midst of a population sullenly passive in action, and decidedly hostile in feeling. They were poorly provided with arms and ammunition, and had to trust to the chance stores of the town for food. Yet, with all these disadvantages, they held the town for eleven weeks, making the siege of Colchester memorable amongst the gallant deeds of the age, and at last yielded, not to the foe, but to famine. Their first thoughts were to look to the fortifications, and ransack the store-houses. The walls, which extended round what may now be considered the heart of the town, were formidable for that day. They were about a mile and three quarters in extent, approaching the form of a parallelogram, the longest sides being to the north and south,

running on the latter from Head-gate to the turning of Moore-lane, and on the former from the bottom of the late Botanic gardens to Balkern lane. They enclosed a space of 118 acres, one rood, and 22 perches. They were built chiefly of stone, with a mixture of Roman brick laid in cement, the thickness being generally seven or eight feet; but at the gates and posterns, of which there were seven, it was much stronger. The town was found in all places very weak. The chief fortification, besides the wall, was the old or Balkern Fort, which stood at Balkern-lane, and was raised, it is surmised, upon the site of the castle of king Coel; but the besieged set heartily to work, strengthening the wall, and throwing up ramparts and counter-scarps. A new fort was erected at St. Mary's, which was christened the Royal Fort, and from this a sharp fire was kept up, impeding the work at Essex fort, and killing the stragglers who ventured into the fields. On ransacking the town, too, good stores of corn and wine, fish, salt, and gunpowder were found. At the Hythe, which Fairfax by an oversight neglected to occupy, "in the memory of man there never was known such plenty of all things as there was at that time, which was looked upon by the besieged as a provision almost as great as that of the Israelites in the wilderness." All these things were seized, and quietly brought within the walls, before any attempt was made to cut them off from that point. The large stock of powder thus secured was an especially welcome prize, as the magazines had been nearly exhausted by the first day's fight; and the most daring valour and devotion would have been quickly paralyzed if compelled to stand by the side of silent cannon, and resist the stormers with empty muskets.

The siege was now fairly entered upon, by the besieged with stern determination and hope of relief from risings in other parts of the kingdom,—by the besiegers with an equally firm resolve to carry the place, and make the fall of Colchester, and the fate of its defenders, a warning to those of royalist feelings elsewhere. It was a sorrowful sight for the spectator, as from the old castle top he looked out upon the fair landscape around him, and beheld its beauty, with the full fruits of summer, trampled down by the iron hoof of war. An Essex poet has thus described the prospect from the beleagured town:—

"From the old battlements, with anxious brow,  
The loyal warrior gazes sadly now;  
Stretched here and there upon the scene below,  
He marks the tents and outworks of the foe;  
Beyond, the view a fairer aspect bore,  
As yet unravaged by the tide of war.  
In summer's glowing hues serenely bright,  
The mellow landscape burst upon the sight;

O'er the warm scene the laughing sunlight plays,  
 And nodding harvests ripen in its rays.  
 In full luxuriance the rich fields glowed,  
 And orchards bent beneath their yellow load.  
 Here green hills rose with free majestic swell,—  
 There undulating vallies gently fell;  
 Dark waving woods, like guardians of the place,  
 Stretched their tall arms to meet the sun's embrace;  
 And grazing herds and cottage roofs he sees,  
 And village spires just peeping o'er the trees;  
 While, dimly seen upon the landscape gay,  
 The distant river takes its silvery way.

Oh! sickening thought, that passions fierce and mean,  
 Should waste and ravage this enchanting scene!  
 Oh! impious man, that thou should'st madly dare  
 To mar the spot thy God has made so fair!"

Early in the siege, a strong reinforcement of county regiments from Suffolk and Norfolk, under Col. Gurdon, Sir Thomas Barnardiston, and others, came in to co-operate with Fairfax; and these were posted at Nayland, Stratford, Cataway bridge, and other passes of the Stour, thus cutting off all chance of retreat from the town in that quarter. On the 18th of June, Col. Ewen came in with six companies from Chepstow castle; and the same day two frigates, one of ten and the other of eleven guns, from which hopes of assistance had been entertained by the besieged, were seized at Harwich. A force that was hastening to the aid of the besieged under Major Muschamp, was cut up and scattered at Linton, near Saffron Walden, by a force despatched from before the town. But notwithstanding these discouragements, and the thickening of the clouds of war around them, surrender was a thing as yet unthought of by the leaders within the town. Overtures were indeed made, after a proposal for an exchange of prisoners had been insolently rejected by Fairfax—on, as it appears, the false ground that Sir Charles Lucas was incapable of trust in martial affairs, as he had been his prisoner and had broken his parole—but it was at the instance of the Parliamentary Commissioners who had been seized at Chelmsford, and were held prisoners within the town. They began to tire of their captivity. They found the life of prisoners of war not quite so pleasant as punishing malignants, suppressing May-games, and fattening upon confiscations; and they prevailed upon their captors to allow them to send out a solicitation for a treaty of peace. To this paper the royalists appended the following explanatory comment—"It is the general peace of the kingdom we contend for, and therefore we are content that the committee should send this above written proposal to the Lord Fairfax, according unto their request made unto us." Fairfax replied—

"My Lords,—The paper sent to me, inclosed in the letter from your lordships and Sir Charles Lucas, of the 19th inst. seemes in the first part of it so drawn,

as that I could not well understand it, what kind of treaty, or what peace it meant. But the latter part, underwritten by your lordships, and Sir Charles Lucas, seemes to explain your own meaning, so as if you meant a treaty betwixt the armies for the generall peace of the kingdom, and not otherwise for yourselves or your garrison. And to the contents of it in that sence, I can only say, that such a treaty, and such a peace is not the proper work of myself or the army, but theirs that have imployed us: But if the English be to make a way for conditions to your garrison, I shall, without the trouble of a treaty, let you know what yourselves, and those under you may expect from me, which, for the restoring of quiet to this county, and the kingdom, without more bloodshed, and for the saving of so eminent a town from the chance of war, I shall offer, viz., that if yourselves and the rest with you in Colchester, shall, within 24 hours after notice hereof, lay down armes, the common soldiers, and men of that rank, shall have liberty to depart to their severall homes, and there quietly to remain submitting unto the authority of parliament. (And this I shall make good however, to so many of that sort respectively, as shall accept thereof, and do accordingly). Yourselves, and the officers and gentlemen engaged with you in the town, shall have liberty and passes, to go beyond sea, with equipage befitting their qualities (engaging themselves not to return into this kingdom without leave from the parliament.) And all of both sorts, with the inhabitants of the town, shall be free from plunder or violence of the souldiers; their arms, ammunition, and furniture of war within the town, and also their horses imployed in military service (except such horses and swords as shall be fit to be allowed to captains or superior officers, and gentlemen of quality for their removall) being first delivered up without imbezzlement, in an orderly manner, as shall be further set down, and the forces under my command, or such as I shall appoint, being admitted a peaceful entrance into the town. I desire the gentlemen of the committee of parliament now in your hands (who, by their subscriptions to part of the paper, and by your sending of it as from them, or at their request, are concerned to know what my answer is,) may be acquainted herewith; and indeed if it be concealed from any that are concerned in it, the blame thereof from God and man is like to fall on their heads who shall be the author of such concealment."

This answer, which was read at the head of every troop and regiment in the besiegers' camp, was responded to by the royalists as follows:—

"My Lord,—We have received yours of the 20th, which takes notice of the paper of the 19th, subscribed by the committee, and of our permission to have it delivered to you. You have very justly apprehended our intentions to be the publique peace of the kingdom, and we againe own that sence, and no other, as befitting the duty of Englishmen. And we believe, if both armies were accorded in such an indeavour, it were the most pious, easie, and honourable action wherein they could be engaged. But why you have taken occasion by that act of ours, to offer conditions in particular to us we understand not, nor can it be supposed, without straying and offering violence to our manner of proceeding. Those conditions you proffer to the officers and souldiers on our part, we doe hereby make offer to the officers and souldiers on your part. We shall in this occasion deale frankly and plainly. We doe not without evident reason conceive ourselves to be in a condition able to entertain all the force you can make, and thereby to give courage and opportunity to all true hearted Englishmen to recover their ancient and knowne lawes; or if you shall adventure to attaque us, we doubt not, but by the mercy and assistance of Almighty God to give you such a repulse as shall give testimony of our force and courage, and at how high a rate we value the generall peace of the kingdome. You doe, with more than usual earnestnesse, desire that your answer should be communicated

to the committee, and whom else it may concerne ; we apprehend you chiefly intend the inhabitants of Colchester. We were very unworthy persons if any should exceed us in our care for this good towne ; and we doubt not but God will recompence the kindnesse we have received from them, and that he hath a reward in store for them suitable to the loyalty and fidelity they have hitherto on this occasion manifested toward the king and knowne lawes of the kingdome ; and because you apprehend it so important and necessary to divulge the proceedings in this affaire, we will therefore put it into your power. And therefore we desire your lordship to cause the paper signed by the committee of the 19, and our answer subsigned, the answer of your lordship to us of the 20, and this our reply of the 21, to be all printed, and as many of the prints as you shall send to us we will disperse in Colchester, and those parts of the country under our power, and to each person of the committee one."

To a petition of the inhabitants that the bay and say makers might have a free trade with London during the siege, Fairfax returned a refusal, as a thing unprecedented in war. He pettishly reminded the inhabitants that they had brought the stoppage of trade, with other inconveniences of war, upon themselves, by admitting the royalists into the town, but at the same time, with considerate leniency for the profits of his friends, he intimated that if they sent their bays and says to Lexden-heath, there were in his army men eminent in trade who would drive a little business with them, and pay for the commodities they bought a fortnight after the town should have surrendered. The shrewd weavers, however, thinking, perhaps, that the settlement might be by the sword, in case the town should be taken by storm, seem to have declined this proposal of the Puritan soldier-traders for combining the business of blood and broad-cloth.

In the mean time the besieged were endeavouring to obtain aid from the country people without. An effort to send out gentlemen with commissions to raise men in the neighbouring counties, was baffled by the breaking down of the bridges, and the strict guard of the passes ; but a party that had volunteered in a royalist rising in the surrounding country, was brought in through the quarters of the Suffolk foot, after some delay, owing to the treachery of the captain, who was found ready to betray them to the enemy. A night expedition, sent out to loot Tendring Hundred of its cattle, brought in, with the loss of only two men, a hundred sheep and sixty oxen,—a welcome accession ; and thus, night after night, additions of cattle, corn, and other provisions were made to the commissariat stores. "More," it is added, "might have been obtained had Sir Charles Lucas permitted them to drive the cattle of any but those he knew to be enemies ; but this tenderness of his to his countrymen proved a great injury to his cause, as no opportunity of procuring such supplies occurred afterwards, through the daily narrowing of the bounds in which they were confined by the parliamentarians."



~~arians.~~ The Hythe, however, still continued to yield its supplies, and the enemy seem not to have thought of this storehouse till the royalists had "squeezed all the honey out of the comb."

By the latter end of June the encroaching advances of the besiegers and the sallies of the besieged brought the forces into frequent conflicts. On the 22nd of that month a night attack was made on a fort which Colonel Ewen was erecting near the Shepen, but it failed. Four days after the royalists were beaten from a position they held without the walls in Crouch-street, and their guard-house was fired. The skirmish, the cannonade, and the flames of burning houses now kept the besieged upon the constant alert, and spread alarm amongst the towns folk, who began to be visited by the iron messengers of death even at their household hearths. The house of Sir Harbottle Grimston (formerly the Crouched Friars) was occupied by the royalists, who with their cannon and small shot obstructed and annoyed the workmen upon a new fort in Maldon-lane; Fairfax therefore brought his artillery to bear upon it, and after being riddled through and through it was set on fire and abandoned. A house on the south, on the site of which the Winsley Hospital has risen, was also burnt; a royalist lieutenant-colonel, and other officers and men, who had advanced over East Bridge, were cut off and killed by an ambuscade of dragoons; and by the 1st of July Colonel Whalley had taken Greensted church, when a strong battery was erected in the church-yard to play upon the town. As the sword thus continued to advance upon them, the besieged resolved to oppose to it the power of the pen. An appeal was sent out to the Suffolk forces at Cataway bridge and Stratford, assuring them that the object of those in arms within the town was "the restoring the known laws of the land, the proper interests both of king and subjects, and a well grounded peace." These fair generalities, however, failed to win them over. The Suffolk men were deaf to the soft seduction; and the attempt it appears was made known to the parliamentary leaders, as two days after these troops, having proved themselves faithful under temptation, were marched up to the more active scene of conflict. Leaving guards at Cataway Bridge and Nayland the main body of them, consisting of 2,000 foot and 500 horse, were brought to Mile-end; and having in a successful skirmish with a party of the besieged captured twenty prisoners, they brought a charge of unsoldierly barbarity against the royalists which was never very satisfactorily cleared up. It was alleged that in the pockets of some of the captives there were found bullets which had been chewed and rolled in sand, for the purpose of



increasing the perils and sufferings of those who were wounded by them,—as savages are said to fight with poisoned arrows. Two deserters made affidavits that these bullets were delivered out of the store-houses in the town by order of the commanders. The Earl of Norwich and the other officers denied the inhuman device; but at the same time they admitted that “rough cast slugs were the best they could send on the sudden”—an answer which does not altogether restore the chivalric character which is supposed to have been maintained in the ranks of the royalists of that day. Although this dabbling in diplomacy had proved so futile, another paper pellet was soon after discharged, levelled this time at those within the town. A proclamation was issued calling upon the inhabitants to enlist and serve upon the line for the security of the town; and appended to this was a command that those who refused to do so should deliver all the arms they possessed into the magazine on pain of death and confiscation of their property—a proof that the previous allusion to the zeal and loyalty of the inhabitants was a piece of braggart flourish, and that simultaneously with the assault from without the besieged apprehended an attack from a foe within.

By the first week in July the besiegers had fought their way up on all sides. Their approaches were brought so near that they occupied East-street. The water mill on the river was seized and occupied by a strong guard. The house and premises of a tanner near were set on fire, for the purpose of burning down all the buildings up to the wall, so as to rout the royalists from their guards and quarters within them; and at other points the operations were carried on with greater vigour. Thus pressed the besiegers resolved upon a grand sally: Then followed the principal battle of the siege, which the author of the Diary and others thus describe—

“Sir Charles Lucas commanded in chief, marching at the head of the horse, and Sir Charles Lisle commanded the foot. The whole party consisted of 500 foot, and 200 horse; out of which a forlorn party being drawn, they first marched down towards the river, whilst the besieger's guard was placed on both sides of the street, and a barricade across; from whence, with case-shot from their drakes, and small shot from the barricado and guard-houses, they played very thick upon the forlorn, which had no other passage over the river than a foot-bridge, the end whereof reached within five feet of the enemy's barricado. But, as if it had been only a sporting skirmish amongst tame soldiers at a general muster, they ran in a single file over the bridge; and some, for haste, through the river, mounted their barricado, and beat the enemy off in an instant. Having once gained that, they overturned the drakes, charged upon other parties that still fired upon them in the street; passed by the guard houses, till they had cleared a great part of the street; and surrounding them, charged upon them, who, having neither possibility of relief, retreat, or escape, yielded upon quarter. So they took the captain, lieutenant, ensign, and about 80 private soldiers, with all the other inferior officers. Many

were also killed in the adjacent houses, the whole street being almost full of soldiers. They overturned the drakes, and threw one of them into the river, but not having teams ready, could not bring them off. The whole party being now advanced, and having thus surprised the guard, they marched on, and made good the charge till they had cleared the whole street, which gave so great an alarm to all the parliamentarians' leaguer, that they immediately rallied together all the foot and horse on that side of the river, and marched down the hill from behind the last windmill to the top of another hill, near St. Anne's, in a very full and orderly body, leaving only their colors and pikes, with a reserve, behind the windmill. But the party having gained almost the top of the first hill, followed their charge so smartly that they soon forced the besiegers to a disorderly retreat, so that the fields were overspread with confused and dispersed soldiers, both of horse and foot. The royalists being thereby encouraged, prosecuted their success, till they had beat the enemies up beyond the windmill, and forced reserve, colors, and all they had, or that could rally, to quit the ground, and so to disperse themselves that they were forced to divide their horse into three squadrons, or bodies; one division to keep the field against the party, who had now made a stand in better order; and the other two constantly wheeled up and down, beating up their foot as they ran away. But having now gotten a very thick hedge for a shelter, and being thus forced up, they began to make a stand; and the other's foot, more out of heat of courage than mature policy, still ran on till they gained an old thin hedge, opposite to their enemy beyond the windmill, where they still fired upon the enemy, maintaining the said hedge, whilst a party of Colonel Whalley's horse wheeled about the field between them, which party accidentally discovered they had spent all their ammunition by hearing a soldier foolishly call out for some; and thereupon suddenly clapping spurs to their horses, made a full charge through the hedge upon the royalists, who not having ammunition nor time to retreat, were most of them killed or taken; till which time they had lost very few in the charge, though many were wounded, as could not otherwise be avoided in so smart an engagement. However, the body of the royalist party being upon their retreat, and perceiving what had happened, faced about again, and forced their pursuers once more to a speedy retreat, and so marched easily into the town again, in very good order."

Creditable as this affair was to the courage and skill of the royalists, it brought them no permanent advantage. They suffered much less than their antagonists; their loss in killed and prisoners not exceeding two officers and eighty men, while the Parliamentarians had nearly 300 killed; eighty were captured and carried into the town; and many of their wounded died from the want of good surgical attendance, or through the severity of the weather, which, though it was the heart of the summer, was "strangely cold and rainy." A feeling of discouragement, too, at first spread through the besiegers' camp, and was whispered amongst the men in the trench and by the guard-house fire. Some deserted into the town; others, sick of the work of war, stole away and returned home; others, again, who had come as volunteers, weary of the trenches, hired stragglers who came into the camp to do their duty, paying them as much as 10s. a week. But, notwithstanding this, the besiegers speedily re-occupied their ground in East-street in greater strength, and fired the houses on the west of the river, that the flames might clear away the shelter thus afforded to the enemy.

All the windmills, too, without the town were burnt by Colonel Whalley, that the besieged might have no means of grinding their corn; but it so happened that a quantity of mill-stones lying at the Hythe ready for exportation, had been brought in, and with these horse-mills were fitted up, which secured the supply of daily bread. Nightly sallies continued to be made, generally with success, but not without loss. The forts in St. Mary's, and at North Bridge, did some damage to the enemy. A platform, too, for a brass saker, was made in the frame of the bells in St. Mary's steeple, which flanked the trenches, and "a one-eyed gunner was placed there, whose memory is still celebrated for having singled out and killed many of the Parliamentarians." Irritated at this, and finding that their motions night and day were observed by a sentinel in the steeple, the besiegers brought artillery to bear upon it, but suffering severely from a new battery raised by the royalists on the curtain, they drew off their guns after a large expenditure of shot to little purpose.

On the 12th of July, the following was drawn up at a council of war, and ordered to be widely dispersed, both in the town and in the enemy's leaguer—

"The declaration of His Excellency George Lord Goring, Earl of Norwich with the Gentlemen and Freeholders of the counties of Kent and Essex, in Arms for the prosecution of their General Petition and Solemn Engagement; as also their Offer unto all such Officers and Soldiers as shall join them.

"Could prosperity make us insolent, this overture should be the story of our present fortunes,—how numerous, how unanimous, how associated, and how befriended, have we been in our undertakings! In a word, heaven seems pleased with our proceedings, and earth conspires for our deliverance! Consider with what resolution we have acted in times of despair, and raised ourselves to the present height out of nothing! Consider also, that we still move with the same resolution, and are yet favoured and encouraged by the same providence who at first raised us.

"In this condition, gentlemen and fellow subjects, we salute you in a temper of pure love and christianity, disengaged, I assure you, from any interest whatever, or mixture of revenge or fear. Peace is the end we aim at, and proposed at first to accomplish our designs in a peaceable manner, if it were possible so to do.

"We have compassionately considered the number of innocent souls who have been seduced by the imposture of a pretended liberty, and the many who have been brought into erroneous and unfortunate engagements by their necessities, all of whom must certainly perish if not preserved by this now only remaining expedient. Therefore, whatever officer or soldier now in arms against us shall, on or before the 21st day of this instant July, repair unto us or join any part of our forces, and with them enter upon action, and not proceed against us for the future, shall have his or their arrears paid unto him or them; and we do further hereby oblige ourselves to intercede to his most sacred Majesty for an act of indemnity, and we do not in the least doubt but our most gracious sovereign the king will immediately grant the same; and for the performance hereof on our part, we tie our honors and the faith of the county, vowing withal, that we design no alteration, either in

church or commonwealth, but such as this present parliament hath declared and allowed to be the duty of good christians and loyal subjects."

The siege was continued with cautious skill by Fairfax. On the 14th of July the Hythe church, with the works about it, was taken; and the house of Lord Lucas at St. John's Green was carried by assault, about one hundred who were gallantly defending the Gate-house being blown up and buried in the ruins by the explosion of the magazine, which was fired by grenades. The heavy cannon were then planted on St. John's Green, and the saucy saker in St. Mary's was silenced; one side of the steeple and a great part of the church falling in ruins upon the dead gunner.

Presuming the defenders must begin to be disheartened, Fairfax sent in an offer of honourable conditions to the soldiers if they would surrender or retire; but the General and Sir Charles Lucas replied, it was "not honourable or agreeable to the usages of war to offer conditions separately to the soldiers, exclusive of their officers;" and intimated that if another such missive came it was likely the messenger would be hanged. Desperate from the circle of destruction narrowing around them, and hope of relief having vanished with the news which had been some time before received of the failure of the royal risings in various parts of the kingdom, the besieged that night made an attempt to cleave their way through the lines in the hope of escaping into Suffolk by Nayland Bridge. When darkness set in they crossed the river by Middle Mill, with the miller for a guide, and some pioneers to cut through the hedges and banks to Boxted; but they were misled, became confused, were marked by the besiegers, and were compelled to re-enter the town by the light of the burning suburbs about North Bridge, which were set on fire by their pursuers.

Grim and gaunt famine, the offspring of the merciless blockade, now began to stalk the streets, and to make its presence felt at the barrack board and at the hearths of the inhabitants. Great exertions were made by Lord Loughborough, who had care over the provisions of the royal army. The mayor was called upon to set up mills and endeavour to provide for the towns-folk; but he obstinately left them to starve, in the hope that hunger would lead to mutiny, which might be taken advantage of by the enemy without. Day by day the meal became more stinted. The soldiers drooped, and the towns-people murmured. The horses, with little hay and no corn, became unfit for service; and at length the garrison was compelled to eat them for food. All the horses were collected in the Castle yard, when a selection was made of the

fattest, every officer being warned that to keep back one of these animals would be treated as an offence, and followed by its forfeiture ; and a sort of festival was held at North Gate, when a war steed was roasted whole, " to make the soldiers merry at the entrance into such diet." A close search was made in the shops and houses for everything eatable, but it only served to show the miserable state of the town. In some a peck or two of corn was found, in others none ; but a store of oil and spice was discovered which served to give flavour to the horse flesh ; and all the starch that could be procured was converted into puddings. These privations broke down the spirit of numbers, who deserted, either by stealing through the lines or by surrendering to the enemy and taking passes ; but the great body remained firm, and their quiet submission to their new fare is stated to have staggered the besiegers. From this time up to the beginning of August there was a fearful struggle with famine within, and the enemy without, the walls. Frequent sallies were made, which, though often successful for the time, failed to thwart the designs of the foe. Two troops of horse, under Sir Bernard Gascoigne, cut their way through by Maldon Lane, escaped towards Tiptree Heath, and dispersed ; but the erection of a fort opposite the ford at Middle-mill closed this point of egress to the starving soldiers. The suburbs at the Hythe were burnt ; and on the 26th of July the besiegers began to batter the walls from St. Mary's towards the North Gate, preparatory to a storm of the town ; but being repulsed in a preliminary attack, and learning that trenches were to be made behind the breaches, which augured a hot reception, they abandoned the idea, and fell back upon the policy of starvation. In the mean time, Fairfax had proposed an exchange of certain prisoners, as the parliamentary committee-men began to be uneasy at feeding on horse flesh, and at finding the cannon balls of the besiegers dropping upon the roof beneath which they were confined—the royalists being accused of locating them conveniently for receiving these compliments of their friends, although, in fact, scarcely a house in the town was secure from the fire ; but as the general refused to grant conditions to the chief gentlemen of the garrison, this was at first declined, though afterwards partially acceded to. Towards the close of the month, letters smuggled into the town assured the soldiers to whom they were read of risings elsewhere, and speedy relief ; but this hope was soon overshadowed by the news that Buckingham had been defeated, and the Earl of Holland was a captive.

At the beginning of August the town presented an awful

scene of misery and desolation. Skeleton men were feeding upon skeleton horses. Almost every means of sustaining the lives of the animals that were to be delivered to the butcher had been exhausted. They had eaten the thatch from all the houses and buildings, the green boughs from all the trees; and at length the men went out in parties under the fire of the enemy to cut grass to sustain them. When the emaciated beasts were killed, not being well salted, they bred worms, and the soldiers who fed upon the lean and rotten carcases sickened and died. It might in truth be said—

“The soldier in the assault of famine falls,

And ghosts, not men, are watching on the walls.”

Yet they steadily refused the terms of surrender offered, because they were not extended to their commanders. The townspeople were suffering equally with the soldiers. They were breadless in their battered houses. The mayor and aldermen applied to Fairfax for permission for the inhabitants to quit the town to save them from perishing; but this fierce clamour for food was a part of his system of attack; and orders went forth through trench and fort to fire upon the inhabitants should they attempt to issue from the walls. At the close of the first week in August it is recorded that “horse flesh began to be as precious to the distressed royalists as the choicest meats before; the soldiers in general, and all officers and gentlemen, from the lords to the lowest degree or quality, eating nothing else, unless cats and dogs. And so great were their necessities, that the horses could scarce be secure in the stables, but every morning one stable or other was robbed, and the horses knocked on the head, and sold in the shambles by the pound. Nor was there, in a short time, a dog left, for it was the custom of the soldiers to reserve half their ammunition-loaf, and in a morning walk the streets, and if they discovered a dog, to drop a piece of bread, and so draw him on till within their reach, then with the butt end of their musket kill him, and carry him to their quarter: six shillings was known to be given for the side of a dog, and yet but a small one neither.”

By the middle of August, crowds of the poor of the town gathered nightly round the head quarters of the royalists, the men clamouring for a surrender, and the women and children rolling on the ground and demanding bread. In vain the soldiers tried to disperse them. The women even prayed for quick despatch by the bullet, in preference to the slow torturing death by starvation. Melted by this harrowing scene, Lord Goring sent out to Fairfax requesting leave to send to the prince, who, it was stated, was in the mouth of the Thames with nineteen



men-of-war; and he engaged to surrender if relief came not within twenty days. Sharp messages followed, Fairfax stating he should visit them in the town before the expiration of that period, and the besieged challenging him to the storm; but the only conditions offered were passes for the soldiers to their homes, and the surrender of the officers at discretion. These were refused. On the 21st one of the gates was set open and the famishing towns-people told to go out to the enemy. Many did so; but in accordance with the former order, they were fired upon by the guards and driven back. Negotiations were reopened. Dr. Glisson, a physician of the town, was sent out, accompanied by Mr. Sheffield, one of the captive commissioners; but information had been received of the defeat of the united Scotch and royalists in Lancashire, and this decided Fairfax not to retract in the slightest degree from his former hard conditions. In the mean time, stratagems to excite mutiny in the town were resorted to. Arrows were shot over the walls into the streets with papers attached to them containing promises and threats to the soldiers; but these were returned to the lines, endorsed with strong expressions of contempt. On Sunday, the 21st, one of these missives brought the following message:—

"Whereas on Sunday last, in a letter to the Lord Goring, Lord Capel, and Sir Charles Lucas, conditions were offered to all private soldiers, and inferior officers under captains, to have liberty to go to their severall homes, without injury or violence, and all superior officers, lords, and gentlemen, to submit to mercy. And whereas the same hath been concealed from the soldiers and inferior officers aforesaid. Nevertheless, if they will, before Thursday next, lay hold on the said conditions, and come away in a body from the enemy, the same conditions shall be performed to them which have been offered; but in case they shall suffer the towns-people (whom we shall not receive) to be turned out of the town, and suffer them to perish under the walls, they must expect no mercy, and if the townsmen in arms shall joyne with the soldiery in coming forth in a body as aforesaid, they shall also be free from violence."

The soldiers, however, maintained their noble firmness, and resolved to accept no conditions of which their officers did not share the benefit.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### SURRENDER OF THE TOWN—EXECUTION OF SIR CHARLES LUCAS AND SIR GEORGE LISLE.

**F**EARFUL was now the state to which the garrison was reduced. Eight hundred horses had been eaten, and but few remained. Scarcely a cat or a dog was left in the town. Malt, barley, oats, rye, peas, and every kind of grain had been made into bread; and there was not corn left sufficient for one day's provision. The enemy's approaches



had in some places been brought so near, that at the wall of St. Botolph's Priory Garden the besiegers and the besieged frequently conversed together, and amused themselves by throwing stones at each other; yet in case of a storm there was not ammunition enough left in the town for two days' fight. This state of things began to breed thoughts of some desperate deed for their deliverance. Accordingly, the following paper was drawn up, signed, and circulated through the garrison:—

"We whose names are hereunto written, do, in the presence of Almighty God, protest against all conditions that are or shall be sent from the enemy, by which our liberties may be infringed, and our honours blemished. And we do upon our honours solemnly engage ourselves not to desert one another, nor the foot, till by God's assistance we have forced our passage through all that shall oppose us, or to perish in the act, which we attest this three and twentieth of August, one thousand six hundred and forty eight.

Soon after, the besiegers sent into the town, by means of a kite, copies of a pamphlet entitled—"The Relation of a great Victory over the Scots, and their General Rout," the details of an event which had given a death-blow to the last hope of relief. At the same time they fired a general volley upon the town from every gun, great and small, as a salute in honour of the event. The rattle of the musket balls and the crashing of the great shot led to the belief that the wished-for storm that was likely to terminate their sufferings was coming, and the men rushed to their posts, happy to meet another foe than famine at the walls. Eagerly the haggard soldiers gathered round the iron cauldrons of boiling pitch which, to eke out their other means of defence in case of assault, were kept ready night and day along the whole line; and desperate and determined hands grasped the long ladles by which it was intended to pour the fiery shower over the ramparts upon the enemy. But the assailants came not. The message was afterwards sent out to them that if they chose to make the attack they need not trouble themselves to spring a mine, for any gate of the town they named should be set open to them, and their entrance disputed hand to hand. The cool spirit of Fairfax, however, was not to be stirred by this chivalrous offer, or provoked by the defiance into any act that would diminish the advantage at which he held his adversary. The desperate resolution was therefore formed by the besieged of assaulting the camp of the besiegers, in the hope that some at least might be able to cleave a way through the lines. Without bread for another day, and only a barrel and a half of gunpowder left, it was impossible to hold out longer. The warriors met in council, and the compact was solemnly made that the whole of the garrison should be mustered at the dead of night, and the officers having pistoled

their horses at the head of the force, so as to show they had no better chance of escape than the meanest soldier, two of the gates should be set open, and the royalist band, rushing on the enemy's line and into his head quarters, should there meet death or secure deliverance. There was a hope that this sudden surprise might be successful.\* There was an excitement in the project that was welcomed by the weary and half-worn-out spirits of the men, who fell readily into it. The remnants of the ammunition were gathered up; short scaling ladders were collected; and every preparation was made for the midnight march upon an enemy well supplied with every requisite of food and defence, and trebling them in numbers. In the course of the day the parliamentarians began battering the wall against Berry Fields with four heavy cannon. This fresh alarm enabled the royalists to get their material together, and keep the men in readiness for the nightly sally without exciting the notice of the townsfolk, who might have betrayed the design. As darkness approached, however, some of the officers began to flinch and hesitate. They counselled delay till another night. The suspicion, too, began to infect the soldiers that the officers were looking to their own safety, and intended to abandon them in the fight. The hearts of those who had stood by their leaders with such noble constancy through famine, and despair, and the temptations of the foe, failed them at the thoughts of treachery. The murmurs swelled into mutiny; and the men, quitting their posts, threatened to throw their officers over and make terms for themselves. This feeling was quelled by fair words; something like discipline was restored; but the enthusiastic confidence in each other by which alone success could be secured in the meditated attempt was gone, and surrender was the only resource. Accordingly Colonel Tuke, accompanied by J. Barnardiston, Esq., one of the Chelmsford prisoners, was sent out to settle terms and sign the capitulation,—the fire in

\* It is stated that Thomas Aylett, a captain amongst the defenders, and the owner of the manor of Aythorp Roothing, which was spent in the service of the king, resorted to a stratagem which has been a nursery story ever since:—"When the besieged had fed upon cats, dogs, and horses till their diet was more dreadful than death, the cavalry, of which body he was, resolved upon a sally to sell their lives as dear as they could, or cut their way through the enemy. He had kept a bull for that purpose, which he besmeared all over with pitch, tar, and grease, then set fire to him, and turned him out of the gate amongst the besiegers in a dark night; the consternation occasioned by the unusual sight and horrid roaring he judged proper for his design; but the foot in garrison, suspecting that if they were deserted by so great a part of their strength they should all be put to the sword, opposed and put an end to the attempt."

the mean time ceasing, and the contending soldiers in many places mingling together on the lines. The messengers found Fairfax in a stern mood. The crushing of the royal cause in other parts, and probably the fierce spirit of Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law, who was in the camp, induced him to withdraw his former offers, and the following hard conditions of surrender were at length signed--

"Articles agreed upon the 27th of August, 1648, by and betweene the Commissioners of His Excellency the Lord Generall Fairfax on the one part: and the Commissioners of the Earl of Norwich, Lord Capell, and Sir Charles Lucas on the other part, for and concerning the rendition of the town and garrison of Colchester.

"1st. That all the horses belonging to the officers, souldiers, and gentlemen, ingaged in Colchester, with saddles and bridles to them, shall be brought into Maries Church yard, by nine of the clock to morrow morning, and the spare saddles and bridles into that church, and delivered without wilful spoyle to such as the Lord Generall shall appoint to take charge of them.

"2nd. That all the arms, colours, and drums belonging to any of the persons in Colchester above mentioned, shall be brought into St. James' Church, by ten of the clock to morrow morning, and delivered without wilful spoyle or embeazlement to such as the Lord Generall shall appoint to take charge of them.

"3rd. That all private souldiers, and officers under captaines, shall be drawne together into the Fryers yard, adjoyning to the East-gate, by ten of the clock to morrow morning, with their clothes and baggage, their persons to be rendered into the custody of such as the Lord Generall shall appoint to take charge of them; and that they shall have faire quarter, according to the explanation made in the answer to the first quere of the commissioners from Colchester, which is hereunto annexed.

"4th. That the lords, and all captaines, and superiour officers, and gentlemen of quality, ingaged in Colchester, shall be drawne together to the King's Head, with their clothes and baggage, by eleven of the clock to morrow morning, and there render themselves to the mercy of the Lord Generall, into the hands of such as he shall appoint to take charge of them, and that a list of the names of all the generall officers and field officers, now in command in the towne, be sent out to the Lord Generall by nine of the clock in the morning.

"5th. That all the guards within the towne of Colchester shall be withdrawne from the line, forts, and other places, by eight of the clock to morrow morning, and such as the Lord Generall shall appoint shall thereupon come into their roomes.

"6th. That all the ammunition shall be preserved in the places where it lyes, to be delivered to the Comptroller of his Excellencies Traine by ten of the clock to morrow morning; and all the waggons belonging to the souldiery or persons engaged, with the harnesses belonging thereunto, shall be brought to some convenient place neare the ammunition, to be delivered to the same person by the same houre.

"7th. That such as are wounded and sick in the towne, shall be there kept and provided for, with accomodation requisite for men in their condition, and not removed thence untill they be recovered, or able without prejudice to their healths to remove, and shall have such chyrurgions allowed to looke to them as are now in the towne.

"8th. That all ordinance in the towne, with their appurtinances, shall, without wilful spoyle, be left at the severall platformes or places where they are now planted, and so delivered to his Excellencies Guard that shall take the charge of those places respectively.

"9th. That from henceforth there shall be a cessation of arms on both parts, but the forces within the towne to keepe their own guards, and the Lord Generalls to keepe theirs, untill they shall be removed according to the articles aforegoing.

"Signed by us,

"The Commissioners on the behalf of  
His Excellency the Lord Fairfax :—

THO. HONYWOOD,  
H. IRETON,  
THO. RAINSBOROWE,  
EDWARD WHALLEY,  
WIL. BLOYS,  
BRAM. GURDON,  
J. SPARROW,  
ISAAC EWER,  
THO. COOKE,  
G. BARNARDISTON,

The Commissioners on the behalf of  
the Earl of Norwich, the Lord Capel,  
and Sir Charles Lucas :—

WILLIAM COMPTON,  
AB. SHIPMAN,  
EDW. HAMMOND,  
S. TUKE,  
WILLIAM AYLOFFE."

The queries, with their answers, alluded to in the foregoing document were as follows :—

"Heith, August 27, 1648.

"Queries propounded by the commissioners from Colchester to the commissioners of his Excellency the Lord Fairfax upon the conditions sent into the towne.

"1st. What is meant by faire quarter? 2nd. What by rendring to mercy? Answer to the 1st. By faire quarter we understand, that with quarter for their lives they shall be free from wounding or beating; shall enjoy warme clothes to cover them and keep them warme; shall be maintained with victuals fit for prisoners while they shall be kept prisoners. To the 2nd. By rendring to mercy we understand, that they be rendered or render themselves to the Lord Generall, or whom he shall appoint, without certaine assurance of quarter, so as the Lord Generall may be free to put some immediately to the sword (if he see cause) although his Excellency intends chiefly, and for the generality of those under that condition, to surrender them to the mercy of the parliament and Generall. There hath been large experience, neither hath his Excellency given cause to doubt, of his civility to such as he shall retaine prisoners, although by their being rendred to mercy, he stands not engaged thereby."

Upon the return of these answers, the commissioners from Colchester propounded these two further queries :—

"1st. Whether these that were surrendered to mercy shall enjoy their wearing clothes, as well those on their backs, as what other change they have? 2nd. Whether the noblemen and officers shall have use of their owne horses to the places where they shall be confined? To which was answered by his Excellencies commissioners. To the 1st. It is intended that those who shall be rendred and received to mercy, shall enjoy the wearing clothes on their backs, but for more the Generall will not be ingaged. To the 2nd. It is expected (in case of surrender upon treaty), that all horses as well as arms be delivered up; and for circumstances thereof there is to be an article yet for the gentlemen and officers under this condition in question (when any of them shall be removed to the places of confinement,) his Excellency will take care for horses to carry them (with respect to their quality), but for allowing their owne horses he will not be ingaged."

The next morning the parliamentary army marched triumphantly into the exhausted town, which they had won more by their patient waiting than by their bravery. In the after-

noon, when Fairfax entered and rode round the lines, he is stated to have expressed his wonder how the place could have held out so long against him. It was, indeed, a scene of desolation. Large shot lay piled here and there in goodly store, but without powder to propel them from the guns. The store-houses were empty. Almost the last mouldy crust of pea or barley bread, and the last slice of stinking horse-flesh, had been eaten. The gaunt faces of the towns-folk who gathered round to gaze upon and welcome the conqueror, told of the misery they had endured. The churches were battered and defaced; the suburbs had become a wilderness of ruins; within the town itself 186 houses had been burnt or destroyed; and everywhere the grim spirit of war—

“Now weary sat amongst the mangled heaps,  
And slumbered o'er its prey.”

The lords and gentlemen of the royal army assembled at their appointed prison-house at the King's Head, and the common soldiers mustered mournfully at the places appointed for them. The total number surrendered was 3,531, so that those in arms who had fallen in the siege, or had fled from the place before the withering breath of famine, had not much exceeded 500.

Now came the last sad scene—the deaths of Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, who were reckoned amongst the first commanders in the royal service. The noble defence, it might have been supposed, would have raised admiration and respect in gallant minds; but the being held so long at bay by a weak foe had irritated the leaders, who resolved to take in cold blood the lives of those whom they had feared to meet in the open gate or on the scaled rampart. Fairfax, having taken up his quarters in the town, a council of war assembled at the Moat Hall, when the resolution was speedily taken to execute Sir Charles Lucas—against whom the general of the parliamentarians appears to have had some personal pique—and Sir George Lisle. The hard souls of Ireton and the other puritan jurors and military judges added to the death-scroll the names of Sir Bernard Gascoigne—who, though doomed, was at last spared, through some scanty oozing out of mercy; and of Colonel Farre, but the latter had fortunately escaped. This decision of the council being taken, Colonel Ewer was sent for the victims to the King's Head, where the captive lords and gentlemen were huddled together in one room, from which they durst not stir on peril of being stripped and maltreated by the exultant and unruly soldiery. Melancholy was the feeling which ran through that band of vanquished

royalists as the messenger of evil called over the fated names, and requested them to attend the council of war. It was felt to be an invitation to death. The prisoners were therefore not surprised when, after a brief confinement at the Moat Hall, they were called before the council and told—"That after so long and obstinate a defence, until they found it necessary to deliver themselves up to mercy, it was necessary, for the example of others, and that the peace of the kingdom might be no more disturbed in that manner, that some military justice should be executed; and therefore the council had determined they three should be presently shot to death." From the Moat Hall they were taken to the old castle, then used as the county prison. Ireton following them to its gloomy cells, bade Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle prepare for death, according—as he informed them, in reply to an enquiry as to the law under which they were to suffer—"to an order of parliament, by which all that were found in arms were to be proceeded against as traitors." "Alas!" responded Sir Charles, "you deceive yourselves; me you cannot; but we are conquered, and must be what you please to make us." In vain the other captives sent a protest against two being singled out to suffer for acts for which all were equally responsible. In vain did the victims plead for time till the next morning to settle some affairs in this world, and prepare their souls for another. The victors were inexorable; their vengeance could not wait. On this refusal being communicated to him, Sir Charles Lucas somewhat haughtily replied—"Sir, do not think I make this request out of any desire I have to live, or escape the death you have doomed me to, for I scorn to ask life at your hands; but that I might have time to make some address to God above, and settle some things below; that I might not be thrown out of this world with all my sins about me. But since it will not be by your charity, I must submit to the mercy of God, whose holy will be done. Do your worst; I shall soon be ready for execution." Sir George Lisle was even refused time to write to his father and mother. The chaplain of Lord Capel was therefore sent for; the prisoners engaged in earnest devotion; and from that lone dim cell in the old castle, with the rattle of arms at the door, the humble death-prayer ascended to heaven.

The execution took place at seven o'clock the same evening. Let us turn to that historical picture of the Castle Bailey, which it needs only a few truthful ink-splashes to paint. A descending August sun is gilding the time-worn turrets of the castle, and flinging long slanting shadows from its high walls. There are fevered movements in the interior,—a sign of excite-



ment in the faces of the sentinels at the gates. On the north side three files of musketeers are drawn up with grim precision upon the green turf in the foreground, set in a frame-work of the uniforms and glittering arms of the other troops. A few townsfolk who have heard of the hurried process have gathered, and cluster around in the space beyond, some with the hard traces of unpitying religious rancour in their countenances, mingled with exulting approval of the fate of those through whom they have suffered pecuniary loss and hard privations,—others with a sad look and a silent tear for Sir Charles Lucas, who ere this troublous time set in had been known as a neighbour and a friend. Colonels Ireton, Whalley, and Rainsborowe are upon the ground, moving to and fro, and superintending the proceedings. And now from yonder narrow doorway, cut in the thick wall, issue the three doomed knights. Upright and defiant they are led to the appointed spot, a few paces from the wall. Here Sir Bernard Gascoigne is reprieved,—it is found, we are told, he is a foreigner; Sir George Lisle, with more compassion than was shown to him an hour ago, is led aside that he may not witness the fall of his friend; and Sir Charles Lucas prepares himself for the death shot. “I have often,” said he, “faced death in the field, and now you shall see I dare to die.” Offering up a hasty prayer, with the green sward for his altar, he rises from his knees with a cheerful countenance, and opening his breast to the soldiers, exclaims to them—“See, I am ready for you—now, rebels, do your worst.” As the sound of the last words fade away, four musket balls stretch him dead upon the turf. Sir George Lisle is now brought up to the quivering and bleeding corpse. He kneels and kisses it; and then, some fluttering home-vision having called up an expression of filial tenderness, he addresses those around him—“Oh! how many of your lives who are now present here have I saved in hot blood, and must now myself be most barbarously murdered in cold! But what wicked act dare they not do who would willingly cut the throat of my dear king, whom they have already imprisoned, for whose deliverance and the peace of this unhappy nation I dedicate my last prayers to heaven!” And now he scans his executioners with a soldier’s eye, and thinking they are too far off, invites them to come nearer. One of the men volunteers the assurance, “I’ll warrant you, Sir, we’ll hit you,” to which Sir George replies, with a smile and a lurking sneer—“Friends, I have been nearer you when you missed me.” A short prayer, and the defiant command, “Now, traitors, do your worst,” is followed by the ring of another death-volley through the air.



It was a foul deed. To our minds it bears upon it the stamp of cruelty and injustice; but it might perhaps plead at that period the state of the country and the usage of the victor under previous governments, which had been for the axe to follow the successes of the sword. Lingard says: "The blood of these brave men impressed a deep stain on the character of Fairfax, nor was it wiped away by the efforts of his friends, who attributed their death to the revengeful councils of Ireton." What the people thought of it is shown by the notion which for a long time prevailed—that the bareness which the trampling of the curious produced around the place, was the result of some mysterious supernatural agency, which prevented the grass growing on the spot where the victims fell. There is indeed a melancholy interest woven around the memory of these two men. Their want of discretion in embarking in a premature and reckless movement is apparent. The virtues which they worshipped in the king are not very apparent at the present day. But their fidelity to the cause they had espoused, their gallantry in defending it, the manner of their death, excite our sympathy, and ought long since to have called up some better memorial than the miserable piece of hearthstone which some casual hand has thrown down to mark the spot on which they perished.

Immediately after the execution the two bodies were privately interred together in a vault belonging to the Lucas family on the north side of St. Giles's church; but after the restoration in 1661, their funerals were magnificently solemnized, and the following inscription was placed on a black marble stone above their resting-place:—

"Under this marble ly the bodies of the two most valiant Captains Sir Charles Lucas, and Sir George Lisle, Knights, who for their eminent loyalty to their sovereign, were on the 28th day of August, 1648, by the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax, the Generall of the Parliament army, in cold blood, barbarously murdered."

There is a tradition that "George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who had married the Lord Fairfax's only daughter, finding that this epitaph reflected upon his father-in-law's memory, applied to King Charles II. to have it erased. Whereupon the king mentioning it to the Lord Lucas, his lordship said, he would readily obey his majesty's command, provided his majesty would be pleased to permit him to put in the room of it, "That Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle were barbarously murdered for their loyalty to King Charles I., and that his son, King Charles II., ordered this memorial of their loyalty to be erased." Whereupon it is said the king ordered the epitaph to be cut in as deep as possible (as it is) instead of being erased.

Fairfax despatched the following account of the surrender of the town, and his proceedings, to the Earl of Manchester, as Speaker of the House of Peers :—

“ My Lord,—I have herewith sent you the articles, with the explanations annexed, upon which it hath pleased God, in his best time, to deliver the towne of Colchester, and the enemy therein, into your hands, without further bloodshed, saving that (for some satisfaction to military justice, and in part of avenge for the innocent blood they have caused to be spilt, and the trouble, damage, and mischief they have brought upon the towne, this country, and the kingdome), I have, with the advice of a consell of warre of the chiefe officers, both of the country forces and the army, caused two of them who were rendered at mercy to be shot to death, before any of them had quarter assured them. The persons pitched upon for this example were Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle ; in whose military execution I hope your lordships will not find cause to thinke your honour or justice prejudiced. As for the Lord Goring, Lord Capell, and the rest of the persons rendred to mercy, and now assured of quarter (of whose names I have sent your lordships a particular list), I doe hereby render to the parliament's judgment, for further publique justice and mercy, to be used as you shall see cause. I desire God may have the glory of his multiplyed mercies towards you and the kingdome in this kinde, and in the condition of instruments as to the service here, the officers and souldiers of Essex and Suffolke (who in this time of so dangerous defection have adhered constant to your's and the kingdome's interests), for their faithfull demeanour and patient indurance in the hardships of this service, are not to be forgotten.

“ Your Lordship's most humble Servant,

*Heith, 29th Aug., 1648.*

“ T. FAIRFAX.”

Two hours after the execution of Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, the other lords and gentlemen had fair quarter assured them, and were subsequently despatched to different prisons in the kingdom. Lord Goring and Lord Capel were afterwards condemned, at the instance of parliament, by the high court of justice ; but the latter only was executed.

Many of the royalist officers were distributed amongst the regiments, that the soldiers might extort ransom from them. As to the inferior officers and private soldiers, a tale of savagery is told which, for the character of humanity, it must be hoped has been exaggerated by royalist writers :—“ When they were drawn from their line they shut them up in the churches, placing guards over them, and gave free liberty to their foot soldiers to go in and pillage them, so that, in a very short time, there were very few left with any clothes, and hardly shirts on. In that miserable condition they marched them away in a most violent and lasting rain, dragged them from place to place in the country, lodging them in churches and such places, till many of them starved ; and several, that could not march by reason of faintness, they pistolled in the highways : and finally, some they sold to be transported into foreign countries from their wives and children.”

The sympathy of the town with the assailants, and its passive

attitude throughout the siege, did not save it from punishment. For their want of active co-operation on the side of the Parliament, a fine of £14,000, afterwards reduced to £12,000, was inflicted upon the inhabitants. Of this sum, £10,000 was divided amongst the army, and the other £2,000 was distributed amongst the poor and those who had suffered most from the siege.

Thus closed this melancholy page in Essex history; but happily it was the last occasion on which the banner of civil war was unfurled within its borders. It has been conjectured that the prevalence of nonconformist principles in the county is attributable to the large number of Cromwell's soldiery who settled down here after the siege; but it has been seen that the political and religious feelings which led to the establishment of the Commonwealth had spread largely over the county long prior to this period.

## CHAPTER XIX.

AN ESSEX WOMAN AT THE KING'S TRIAL—DR. GAUDEN AND THE ICON BASILIKE—ELECTION OF CROMWELL'S PARLIAMENT—EXACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT—SIR H. GRIMSTON—EJECTION OF THE NONCONFORMING CLERGY IN THE COUNTY—OATES'S PLOT.

THE victory in Essex, following and completing the successes in other parts of the kingdom, rendered the army again supreme. It afforded scope and pretence for the most violent measures; and the trial and destruction of the king was determined on. The unfortunate monarch was again seized, and when brought before the high court of justice constituted to try him, in the midst of that solemn and tragical scene there broke forth the voice of an Essex woman protesting in mockery against the whole proceeding. On the calling over the names of those who had been appointed to form the court, Lord Fairfax did not answer, and a voice from amongst the assembled spectators exclaimed—"He has too much wit to be here." Again, when the indictment against the king was read, accusing him of treason in the name of the people of England, the words—"Not a tenth of them," came ringing in clear accents from the same quarter. This bold assertion startled the court. The officer on guard gave an order to fire into the box from whence it proceeded; but this ferocious command was not obeyed. It was then found that the words proceeded from Lady

Fairfax, the wife of the conqueror of Colchester, and the daughter of Lord Vere of Tilbury, whose mansion was at Gobsons, now the property of the Branfill family. This lady had been carried away by the violent feeling of the time,—she had been proud of her husband's achievements in behalf of the parliament; but was now struck with horror at the melancholy consequences to which his victories had led.

Some of the members sent by Essex to the parliament stood aloof from the trial and all participation in the proceedings which followed. The members for Essex at this time were Sir Martin Lumley and Sir William Masham—men, it has been already seen, active on the side of the parliament; for Colchester, Sir Thos. Barrington, J<sup>r</sup>. Sayer, Esq., and Sir H. Grimston after the decease of the latter; for Maldon Sir Henry Mildmay and Sir John Clotworthy; and for Harwich, Sir Harbottle Grimston, Sir Thomas Cheke, and Capel Luckyn, Esq. Most of these followed the path of Cromwell, and cleaved to what was called the popular cause; but several of them—particularly Sir Harbottle Grimston—absented themselves from the Commons when the king's trial was discussed; and their garments were thus unspotted by the blood of the sovereign when, on that dull cold morning of January 11, the executioner raised his axe in Whitehall, and wielded it as a pioneer to clear Cromwell's way to the supreme power of the protectorship. Two of the Essex members, Sir William Masham and Sir Henry Mildmay, however, had not been so fastidious; and were appointed members of the council of thirty-two to whom the powers of government were entrusted after the death of the king. In this capacity they employed themselves in adapting the laws and representation to a realm without a monarchy.

To an Essex man has been ascribed the authorship of the celebrated *Icon Basilike*, a portraiture of the feelings of the king in his solitude and sufferings—a work admitted to be the best prose composition in the English language at the time of its publication, so full of piety, meekness, and humanity, that it produced an immense effect upon the nation, and ran through fifty editions in the year. The royalists of course insisted it was a genuine work of the decapitated king, by whom it professed to be written; but at the restoration, Dr. Gauden, the minister of Bocking, declared himself the real author. He advanced his pretensions adroitly and quietly to the government, and received, it is said, the bishopric of Exeter and afterwards the richer see of Worcester, to remain silent upon the subject. After his death his claim

transpired, and a fierce controversy was fought over the work. The authorship is a moot point to the present day; but the letters of Dr. Gauden given in the Clarendon papers—and Clarendon must have been aware of the facts of the case—appear to decide the suit in his favour.

In the year 1654, Cromwell having become protector, an election took place under the system he had laid down; and a whole army of knights was sent up from Essex, to aid in the consolidation of the commonwealth. The smaller boroughs throughout the kingdom were wholly or partially disfranchised, as being either too enthusiastic and independent or too loyal for the purposes of the man now in power. Maldon was restricted to one representative; Harwich was struck out of the list, and did not recover its privilege till far in the reign of the second Charles; but to compensate for this, thirteen knights of the shire were ordered to be elected for the county. Great precautions were taken that these should be good men and true according to the idea of the dominant party of the day. The common people and the small freeholders, known royalists and their sons, were forbidden to take part in the election, and no one was allowed to vote who did not possess an estate of the value of £200. This parliament proving untractable, was angrily dissolved. Cromwell proceeded to levy taxes by his own power; and the poor loyalists in the county, who had been from time to time so fearfully plundered, and compelled to redeem their estates, were further fleeced by the exaction of what was called the tenth penny. In carrying out this system of decimation by military authority, all former sufferings and compositions were disregarded. The mere suspicion of a lingering feeling for the fugitive son of the late king was sufficient to bring down the exaction upon those who retained a pound in their pockets or had an acre of land left to them. They were compelled to secure their personal liberty, or to redeem the remnants of their property by the payment of further large sums. This fresh oppression bowed many a loyal head in the county and bore down families to abject poverty. Indeed, parliament, in the exercise of its power, coolly proceeded to rob the delinquents whenever it was in want of money. On one occasion, when a force refused to march till it received £3,000 arrears of pay, an ordinance was at once passed to raise the money by the sale of wood belonging to Lord Petre in this county. Again, on a complaint being made of a scarcity of timber for the navy, the house passed a vote authorizing the shipwrights to fell 2,500 oak trees on the estates of delinquents in Kent and Essex.

In 1656 another parliament was called, when Essex again sent up its thirteen knights; and indeed through all the period of what may properly be termed the commonwealth, the county continued to be represented by this number. It did not return to the election of its quiet constitutional two, till Cromwell had passed from the scene, withered by his anxieties, and his constant fear of the military power he had before made his tool, and which he endeavoured to counteract by a well-paid and well-trained militia—Essex probably keeping on foot for him its tried and trusty bands.

Of the "healing parliament," as it was called, which acting upon the feeling of the country, worn and wearied by its long strife, placed Charles II. upon the throne, Sir Harbottle Grimstone, an Essex man, whose seat was at Bradfield Hall, was chosen speaker. Eminent in the law, he had taken the side of the people on the outbreak of the civil war. We have already seen him active in levying funds in the county, and raising men to coerce and subdue the king. He was, too, as the representative of Colchester, a leading man in the long parliament; but like others of that period, he did not confound a redress of grievances with a desecration of liberty, and as he halted and hesitated when he beheld the crime and confusion into which his colleagues were hurrying, he was amongst those who were excluded from the house of commons as too fastidious in their principles to be entrusted with the desperate work of the day. He had returned with others to his duties on the invitation of General Monk; and thus an Essex man appeared as head of the house of commons when that body attended in Palace-yard to give solemnity to the proclamation of the new king. As a member of all the parliaments of Charles II., and as master of the rolls, the former member of the Eastern Association earned before his death the character of "loyal Grimston."

Few in this county suffered from the retributive measures of restored monarchy. Sir Henry Mildmay, however, as one who had countenanced the death of the king, was, with two others, pinioned upon a hurdle, and drawn through the streets with a halter round his neck, to the gallows at Tyburn, and back again to prison. But the inhabitants were excited and perplexed by the changes and torn by the wild party spirit which continued to agitate and divide the kingdom after the first outburst of joy at the reconciliation, and the rolling back of anarchy, had subsided. Many of the expelled clergy returned to the parsonages from which they had been driven either by assumed authority or by mob violence; and

these men resumed the episcopal form of worship in their churches. Great latitude, however, was for a time allowed in form and doctrine. An accommodation was even proposed, by which the Presbyterian should be retained within the pale of the establishment. This failed. Then came the Act of Uniformity, which banished all strange doctrine from the pulpits and restored the liturgy in its completeness; and 2,000 of the clergy, many of them in Essex, with a sincerity which astonished the kingdom, abandoned their snug vicarages and comfortable rectory-houses, and went forth, voluntarily embracing a life of hardship and poverty rather than accept the articles of subscription which were tendered to them as the condition of retaining their cures. The following is a list of the ejected clergy in this county: it shows at once the extent of the suffering, and the parishes which had been under pastors whose teaching had been most hostile to the system of the Church:—

ABBEY HATCH	...	...	Mr. KNIGHTSLY.
ALPHAMSTONE	...	...	Mr. SAMUEL BRINSLEY, St. John's Col. Camb.
ARKESDEN	...	...	RICHARD PEPPS, M.A., Eman. Col. Camb.
GREAT BADDOW	...	...	Mr. CHRISTOPHER WRAGGE.
LITTLE BADDOW	...	...	THOMAS GILSON, M.A., Eman. Col. Camb.
BARKING	...	...	BENJAMIN WAY, M.A., Oriel Col. Oxen.
BARNSTON	...	...	JOHN BEADLE, M.A.,
BELCHAMP (WALTER)	...	...	Mr. DEARSLEY.
BELCHAMP (OTTEN)	...	...	Mr. THOMAS.
BENTLEY	...	...	Mr. THOMAS BEARD.
BOREHAM	...	...	Mr. JOHN OAKES.
BOXTED	...	...	Mr. LAX, also Mr. CARR.
BRAINTREE	...	...	Mr. JOHN ARGOR, Camb. Univ.
STEPPLE BUMPSTEAD	...	...	Mr. EDMUND SYMMES.
BIRDBROOK	...	...	ISAAC GRANDORGE, M.A., St. John's Col. Camb.
GREAT BURSTEAD	...	...	Mr. SAMUEL BRIDGES.
CHELMSFORD	...	...	Mr. MARK MOTT.
CHICKNEY	...	...	Mr. ARCHER.
CHILDERDITCH	...	...	Mr. HARRIS.
CHISHALL (LITTLE)	...	...	Mr. JAMES WILLET.
CLAVERING	...	...	Mr. JOHN MOORE, Peter-house, Camb.
COGGESHALL	...	...	Mr. JOHN SAMS.
COLCHESTER, ST. ANDREW'S	...	...	OWEN STOCKTON, M.A., Christ's Col. Camb.
„ ST. PETER'S	...	...	Mr. EDWARD WARREN.
COLNE ENGAIN	...	...	Mr. JOHN CLARKE.
COPTFORD	...	...	Mr. ROBERT THOMPSON.
CRANHAM	...	...	Mr. JOHN YARDLEY.
DANBURY	...	...	Mr. JOHN MAN.
DEDHAM	...	...	MATT. NEWCOMEN, M.A., St. John's Col. Camb.
HIGH EASTER	...	...	Mr. MARTIN HOLBITCH.
EASTWOOD	...	...	Mr. PHILLOGERS SACHEVEREL, Ox. Univ.
FEISTED	...	...	Mr. NATHANIEL RANFREW, Eman. Col. Camb.
FEERING	...	...	Mr. CONSTABLE.
FINCHINGFIELD	...	...	Mr. HUGH GLOVER, Eman. Col. Camb.
FINGRINGHOE	...	...	Mr. GREGG.
FORDHAM	...	...	JOHN BULKLEY, M.A.



GESTINGTHORP ...	...	Mr. DAVIS.
HAWKWELL ...	...	Mr. JOHN CHURCH.
HALSTEAD ...	...	Mr. WILLIAM SPARROW, Camb. Univ.
HAMSTEAD (WEST) ...	...	Mr. GREEN.
HANNINGFIELD S. ...	...	Mr. CARDINAL.
HATFIELD BROAD OAK ...	...	JOHN WARREN, M.A., Ox. Univ.
HEMPSTEAD ...	...	Mr. THOMAS ELLIS.
HENHAM ...	...	Mr. SAMUEL ELY.
HEDINGHAM (CASTLE) ...	...	Mr. JOHN SMITH.
HENNY (LITTLE) ...	...	Mr. SAMUEL CROSSMAN.
HOCKLEY ...	...	Mr. FARNWORTH.
HALLINGBURY (LITTLE) ...	...	Mr. WATERS.
HORNCHURCH ...	...	Mr. WELLS.
INGATESTONE ...	...	JOHN WILLIS, M.A.
INWORTH ...	...	Mr. ROBT. DODD, Ox. Univ., also Mr. JENKINS.
LAVER (MAGDALEN) ...	...	Mr. HARVEY.
LAVER (HIGH) ...	...	Mr. SAMUEL BORFET, King's Col. Camb.
LAVER (LITTLE) ...	...	EDWARD WHISTON, M.A., Trin. Col. Camb.
LEIGHS (LITTLE) ...	...	Mr. JOHN BENSON.
LEYTON (LOW) ...	...	PHILLIP ANDENTON, M.A., Eman. Col. Camb.
LINDSELL ...	...	Mr. CLARK.
MALDON ...	...	THOS. HORROCKES, M.A., St. John's Col. Camb.
MORETON ...	...	EDMUND CALAMAY, M.A., Sydney Col. Camb.
NAZING ...	...	Mr. JOSEPH BROWN, Eman. Col. Oxen.
NEVENDON ...	...	Mr. DAVIS FOWLES.
NORTON ...	...	Mr. HUBBARD.
NOTLEY ...	...	Mr. SPARROWHAWK.
OAKLEY ...	...	Mr. JOHN HUBBARD.
OAKLEY (NEAR STANSTED) ...	...	Mr. LUCAS.
OCKENDEN (SOUTH) ...	...	Mr. BARNABY.
ONGAR (CHIPPING) ...	...	Mr. JOHN LORKIN.
PANFIELD ...	...	Mr. GEORGE PURCHAS.
PARDON (GREAT) ...	...	Mr. BASTWICK.
PATTISWICK ...	...	Mr. RALPH HILE.
PEDMARSH ...	...	Mr. BLAKELEY.
PESTLOW ...	...	Mr. HENRY ESDAY.
PRITTLEWELL ...	...	THOMAS PROK, M.A.
RADWINTER ...	...	Mr. GEORGE MOXON.
RAYLEIGH ...	...	ABRAHAM CALEY, B.D.
RETFENDON ...	...	WILLIAM CLOPTON, M.A., Eman. Col. Camb.
RIDGEWELL ...	...	DANIEL RAY, M.A., St. John's Col. Camb.
RIVENHALL... ...	...	Mr. GEORGE LISLE.
ROOTHING ...	...	Mr. JOHN WOOD.
ROOTHING (WHITE) ...	...	Mr. SANDFORD.
SANDON ...	...	Mr. SAMUEL SMITH.
SHALFORD ...	...	Mr. GILES FIRMIN, Camb. Univ.
SHELLEY ...	...	Mr. ZACHARY FINCH.
SHELFIELD ...	...	Mr. GEORGE BOUND.
SHORBURY ...	...	Mr. WATSON.
SOUTHCHURCH ...	...	WILLIAM RUTEBAND, M.A., Ox. Univ.
SPRINGFIELD ...	...	JOHN REEVE, M.A.
STAMBOURNE ...	...	Mr. HENRY HAVERS, Kath. Hall, Camb.
STANFORD RIVERS... ...	...	Mr. MATTHEW ELLISTONE.
STANSTED ...	...	Mr. ROBERT ABBOTT.
STAPLEFORD (ABBOTS) ...	...	Mr. LEWIS CALANDRINE.
STAPLEFORD (TAWNEY) ...	...	Mr. WARD.
STEEBING ...	...	SAMUEL BANTOFT, B.D., Jesus Col. Camb.
STISTED ...	...	Mr. THOMAS CLARK.
STOCK ...	...	Mr. MARTYN SYMPSON.

STOW MARY'S	...	...	Mr. JAMES MAULDEN.
TEY (MUCH OR GREAT)	...	...	Mr. GREEN.
TEY (MARKS)	...	...	Mr. RICHARD RAND.
TERLING	...	...	JOHN STALHAM, M.A., Ox. Univ.
THAKTED	...	...	Mr. JAMES PARKER.
THOYDON MOUNT	...	...	Mr. FRANÇOIS CHANDLER.
TOPPESFIELD	...	...	Mr. JOHN OVERHEAD.
UPMINSTER	...	...	Mr. HAWKES.
WAKERING	...	...	Mr. CHRISTOPHER SCOTT.
WALTHAM (LITTLE)	...	...	JOHN HARRISON, M.A.
WANSTEAD	...	...	LEONARD HOAR, M.D.
WARLEY (LITTLE)	...	...	Mr. POWEL.
WEST HAM	...	...	Mr. WALTON.
WETHERSFIELD	...	...	JOHN COLE, M.A., Jesus Col. Camb.
WHITE COLNE	...	...	Mr. JOHN BIGLEY.
WICKHAM BISHOPS	...	...	Mr. ROBERT BILLIO, Trin. Col. Camb.
WITHAM	...	...	Mr. THOMAS LUDGUTTER.
WHELEY	...	...	Mr. DOWEL.
YELDHAM (GREAT)	...	...	Mr. ROBERT CHADELY.

It appears to have been feared that these nonconformist exiles would in many instances carry the congregations from the parish altars, and leave the churches desolate. An act was therefore passed prohibiting separate congregations, and forbidding any dissenting teacher to come within five miles of any place at which he had preached. Dissent prevailed in the county, nevertheless, and to a great extent,—so hard is it to coerce the conscience by human law; and though these restrictions, with occasional modifications, were continued for a century afterwards, conventicles, as they were called, were set up in secure and secret places, precautions being taken to elude the watchful constable and the lurking informer. An illustration of this existed up to about a year ago in the old chapel, in Baddow-lane, Chelmsford. A sliding panel was to be seen in the wall at the back of the pulpit. The tradition is, that the original building was a solitary barn, and through this loophole, the minister and the people who dared to worship God in what the law called an illegal manner, had a ready means of escape to the wood, which then skirted the rear of the building, and extended from Galleywood Common to the river, while the soldiers employed to hunt the religious fugitives were thundering at the bolted door.

The county was doubtless stirred by the phrenzy which seized upon the whole nation on the promulgation of the news of Oates's plot. In the excited elections which took place in the midst of this fit of blind fury the members for Essex who had sat through the long parliament, were discarded, and Sir Eliab Harvey and Henry Mildmay, Esq. were substituted—it may reasonably be concluded because they fell more into that wild and alarmed feeling which supposed "religious liberty, property, even the lives of men to be at stake." Lord Petre

was one of the five peers who were seized, deprived of their seats, and committed to the Tower on the charge of high treason for alleged complicity in that affair. It was asserted that the chief of the Jesuits had set him down as Lieutenant-General in the new government, by the authority of the Pope; and an impeachment was prepared against him. His Lordship escaped the sad fate of the aged Stafford and the other victims, as, through the long delay, the credit of the plot began to break down, and the imposture to be unmasked; but it was only to die in his prison house.

General Monk, the author of the restoration, had retired from this scene of political strife to the princely mansion and retired walks of New Hall, Boreham, having purchased the estate of the Duke of Buckingham, who recovered possession of it after it had been wrested from the family of Cromwell. A grateful sovereign had created the general Duke of Albemarle, with a pension of £7,000 a-year from the royal revenue; and here the former soldier of the commonwealth, honoured by the country he had rescued from anarchy, lived, it is stated, "in the utmost pomp and grandeur, having everything that wealth could procure, or fancy invent." His last days, however, were embittered by a languishing illness; and he died in his Essex home in 1670, leaving £15,000 a-year in land, and £60,000 in ready money.\* He was buried in Henry the Seventh's chapel, and was followed to the tomb by the Duchess, who, it is stated, had been successively his washerwoman, his mistress, and his wife.

For nearly a century after this period, stirring as were the political conflicts, and important as were the events which occupied the attention of the nation, the part which Essex took in them was only in common with the ordinary course and the current feeling of the rest of the kingdom. It could not remain insensible or inactive. Within its cottages, and around the hearths of its farm-houses, were gathered many of the veteran soldiers of Cromwell and the commonwealth—the men of that fine army which it cost Charles a sigh to disband; and these men, who had studied politics in the camp, and had helped to make and unmake governments by the sword, would naturally act as a leaven on the people around them. The inhabitants,

\* This fortune is to be measured by the price of provisions; and wheat at this period had advanced to nearly the value of the present day. In the year of the Duke's death it was 41s. 8d. per quarter; malt 26s. 6d. Up to the commencement of the next century prices did not fall below this, except in 1689-90-91, when wheat fell at one time to 30s.; but from 1693 to 1699, with the exception of one year, it was over 60s.; once it was 71s.; and in the last-named year, 64s.

therefore, felt strongly, and they occasionally expressed that feeling in the parliamentary addresses of the time, on the questionable acts of the restored king, and the still more arbitrary course of James II. They saw, with grim indignation, the wresting by that sovereign of the charters from the corporations, and the expulsion from office of the deputy-lieutenants and Essex justices who adhered to the test and the penal laws—rights and honours which were not restored till the infatuated king, terrified by the dark storm which was gathering in Holland, rendered himself as despised for his hurried concessions as he was before hated for his tyranny. They must have been irritated, too, on learning that Sir Samuel Barnardiston, a leading man in the public affairs of the county, had been fined £10,000 for reflecting in a private letter on the acts of the government—a piece of revenge, it was thought, for the part he took as foreman of the jury which acquitted Shaftesbury. They looked with hope to the coming of the Prince of Orange; and, doubtless, they regarded it as a special interposition of Providence, when they beheld the king's fleet wind-bound in Harwich harbour, through which the Dutch deliverers were enabled to pass the straits of Dover unopposed. Yet the county remained undisturbed by tumults and insurrectionary movements. It responded readily to the circular-letter which the Prince of Orange sent to the counties, preliminary to the settlement of the government; and it welcomed heartily his accession as William III., with the greater freedom of conscience which the revolution brought. But the inhabitants proceeded steadily with their works of industry, the agriculturists cultivating their fields, and extending them by the enclosure of waste lands, while the cloth weavers of the towns of the northern parts of the county were enriching themselves and those about them. The bay and say makers of Essex had risen into so much importance, that special acts of Parliament were passed to regulate their trade. The company at Colchester was formed into a sort of guild, with officers to carefully examine and stamp their cloths, which brought them into high repute, as is shown by a complaint that competitors at Halsted and elsewhere fraudulently imitated their seals; and, though depressed by the Spanish wars of Queen Anne, they long carried on a flourishing trade. The value of the weekly manufacture in the borough amounted to £30,000. Indeed, the historian seems to have feared that the good town would suffer from over-repletion. "Let us hope," says Morant, speaking of the wealth which the trade caused to flow in, that it "will be used with thankfulness, humility, and prudence, employed in the general good of the

public, and not degenerate into the most criminal luxury, arrogance, selfishness, and dissipation, the too natural effects of overabundance." He draws, too, a deplorable picture of the consequences that would follow the decay of this trade. Houses would be pulled down for want of tenants, taxes would fail, and "moreover, what would become of the great quantities of provisions which, through God's goodness, plentifully grow around, and, by proper encouragement, and a quick consumption, are industriously cultivated, and brought to our markets? There would then be an end of them. The rents of our lands would fall; universal poverty would ensue; and this flourishing town would be reduced to a despicable village. And not only this town, but also the greatest part of this noble and populous county, of which the poorer sort are almost universally employed in spinning the wool, would be reduced to inexpressible straits and misery; for what employment could be immediately substituted in its room?" We know that this trade has long since departed from the land. There is not a yard of broadcloth or other woollen ware made in Colchester or in that part of the county. The whirr of the spinning-wheel, which could be heard at every cottage door, has ceased for nearly half a century; and the present generation has but a vague idea of the shape of that primitive implement of manufacture. But Colchester has not decayed; and though houses have been demolished, it has been to make way for more sumptuous buildings. The land of Essex continues to be cultivated; the poor find employment, and in general, too, possess more of the comforts of life than they did a century ago. So often do we find, in spite of the prophesied ruin which is to follow change, society rights itself as the world moves on; and so inclined are we to believe, notwithstanding the sunset hues with which memory gilds the past, that the "good old times," of which we hear so much in hall and cottage, were not a whit better than they should be.

In the early part of the eighteenth century travelling was very unpleasant and insecure. The highways were in a wretched condition; and though it is stated a great improvement in them commenced in the time of George II., so recently as 1795 we read of seven loaded wagons remaining stuck fast, sunk up to their axletrees, in the great trunk road between Ingatestone and Chelmsford—a distance of six miles. A journey from the heart of the county was a matter that required serious thought and a week's preparation; and we find it advertised as an extraordinary feat, and not without some apologetic explanations to allay the terror of the public at the peril of the undertaking, that

“flying machines”—a sort of cross between the wagon and the stage coach, drawn by chain traces—would leave Chelmsford at eight or nine o'clock in the morning, and actually reach London the same night, returning on the following morning; thus, by extra exertion, accomplishing in two days, and at enormous expense, a journey which may now be performed by a return ticket, in a second-class carriage, for 7s. 6d., in less than three hours. The highwayman, too, was another unpleasant impediment to the traveller. Notwithstanding the ferocity of the law, which consigned numbers to death for robberies at almost every assize, the thief, armed with his pistol and mounted on his steeple-chaser, followed the plundering of the traveller as a profession. Dick Turpin was a good type of this class—a man whom imagination and romance have represented as robbing like a gentleman and acting with good feeling and profuse liberality to the poor and his companions. In truth, however, he was a brutal, unmitigated ruffian. There is no pretence for saying he mingled a character of chivalry with his crimes. His celebrated ride to York is a fable. And though he occasionally did a little genteel business, as it was considered by his class, on the highway, he added to it the coarse calling of the burglar, the smuggler, and the deer-stealer. At the head of what was called the Essex gang, he was the terror of this and the neighbouring counties for nearly ten years from about 1730. He was born at Hempstead, near Saffron Walden, and commenced business as a butcher, but fled for cattle stealing, and commenced his further career of crime as a smuggler in Rochford and Dengie hundreds. As a highwayman and housebreaker his place of retreat was Epping forest; and towards High Beach an excavation is still pointed out to the curious traveller or the loitering pic-nic party as Turpin's cave. He was hanged in 1739 for horse-stealing; for though he had been guilty of murder he does not appear to have been tried on that charge. Benj. Downham, the leader of another notorious robber troop, whose business was principally housebreaking, was executed at Chelmsford, and hanged in chains at Radwinter, in March, 1759. The roads continued unsafe long after this period. Foot-pads infested most parts of the county. Higglers' carts could not go to or return from market without protection; and in 1765 we read of a robber being shot at Loughton by an armed guard accompanying the hay carts returning from London. An Essex stage coach was stopped and robbed by a single highwayman between Ilford and Stratford. And in the same year it was the custom of the farmers attending Colchester market to leave some hours before the usual close

of business to go home in large companies, on account of the robberies that were committed upon them if they travelled singly.

In 1761 a royal meteor flitted across the horizon of the county, and left some of its inhabitants hoarse with loyal shouting. The Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz (the Queen Charlotte of the next fifty years) landed at Harwich on the 7th of September, on her way to marry George III. She was enthusiastically received in her journey through Essex; and sleeping the first night after she set foot on English soil at the mansion of the Marquis of Abercorn, at Witham, she proceeded next day to Romford, where the officers of the court and the royal carriages met her, to conduct her through Stratford to London.

The Essex press was born at this period. No. I. of the *Chelmsford Chronicle, or Essex Weekly-Advertiser*, the first newspaper sheet printed in the county, appeared on the 10th of August, 1764, published by Wm. Stupar at the price of two-pence-halfpenny—the government taking the odd halfpenny in the shape of stamp. It is amusing to look over this little folio of four diminutive pages, each fifteen and a half inches long and ten inches wide, and compare it with the expansive sheet of the same journal at the present day. Three of the thirty-six columns of the steam-printed *Chronicle* would now swallow up the whole of its contents. Nor was its matter much superior to its size. The machinery which now, aided by the railway and the electric telegraph, grasps every incident and records every occurrence in the remotest parishes was unframed; and all the local intelligence was comprised in three or four brief paragraphs and half-a-dozen marriages and deaths. The art which catches “the winged words as they fall from the living lip,” and fixes them firmly on paper, was then unknown in the county; and assizes, and sessions, and public meetings were permitted to pass unreported. The debates in parliament were then a book sealed by stern privilege against the vulgar; and if they were noticed at all it was only by a cautious and mysterious allusion to something that had taken place in “a certain large assembly.” Yet the literary bantling lived, and prospered, and improved. It went on strengthening and expanding; others grew up around it; the *Herald* in 1800; the *Standard* in 1821; the *Gazette* in 1852; the *Telegraph* in 1858; and now Essex possesses five large journals, which, it may be said, without egotism, for ability and fulness of general and local information, reflect honour on the county.

Though freer notions of commerce now prevailed, and some



of the restrictive laws had been repealed, many branches of trade were subjected to strict surveillance by the authorities. For instance, orders were at this time made by the Essex Court of Quarter Session, fixing the rate of charge for all wagoners and carriers for the conveyance of goods at threepence per hundred-weight for every five miles, and so on in proportion, which they were not to exceed under a penalty of £5. There frequently appears upon the rolls of the session orders fixing the price at which corn should be sold at per bushel in the markets; so that the principles of free-trade were then but little understood. Official notices, too, were issued that prosecutions would be commenced against all persons who should presume to buy and sell cattle, fish, fowls, butter, &c., or any dead victuals, without being duly licensed by the justices in Quarter Session, as, it was added, unqualified persons bought at farm-houses and thus raised provisions to an exorbitant price. Cheating, too, was treated as a far more heinous offence than in our day; and in October, 1766, a person was sentenced to be placed in the pillory in Chelmsford for using short weights. These manacles were gradually struck from the limbs of trade; and the false balance, which our fathers thought so infamous, is now visited with a pecuniary fine instead of the foul storm of obloquy and rotten eggs.

## CHAPTER XX.

**ESSEX IN THE AMERICAN WAR—VISIT OF GEORGE III. AND QUEEN CHARLOTTE TO THORNDON HALL—DISCONTENT IN THE COUNTY—THE ASSOCIATION FOR PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—FINE OF £500 INFLICTED ON THE COUNTY—PROCEEDINGS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION—SCARCITY—DEFENSIVE MEASURES AND MILITARY ORGANISATION OF THE COUNTY.**

THE American war procured for the county the honour of a royal visit. The struggle itself, and the position England was placed in towards countries nearer home, from the aid which France gave to the malecontent colonists, rendered extensive preparations and precautions necessary. Essex therefore became a place of armies; camps were formed at Danbury, Warley, Loxden, and at other points; and besides our own soldiery who peopled these canvass towns, ten thousand freshly-imported Hessians excited the rustic wonder of the dwellers about our heaths and commons. Tiptree

and other high grounds bristled with heavy cannon. The genius of war in its slumbering strength appeared to have made its home in the midst of our quiet farm-houses and peaceful corn-fields. In the autumn of 1778 a very large force had been collected at Warley, which was reviewed by the king in person ; and it was with some little surprise the people beheld George III. and her Majesty Queen Charlotte become for two days and nights the guests of a Roman Catholic peer. Lord Petre had made preparations, on a scale of the most lavish liberality, for the reception of the royal guests at Thorndon Hall. The noble drawing and dining rooms were fitted up with costly taste ; and the state bed-rooms, which still retain their title as a memorial of the event, were furnished in a style of splendour befitting a princely palace. The royal party arrived at Brentwood on the 19th of October, and were received in a manner that must have warmed the heart of the king and his royal consort ; for, though this monarch never rose above dull respectability, he was upon the whole a favourite of the people, and at this period, war, and the warlike preparations, had given fervour to the public feeling. The gathered thousands greeted him with the loyal shouts of welcome. The street and roadway from the London entrance of the town, down to the park gate, a distance of nearly two miles, were lined with soldiery ; and the royal pair passed beneath a triumphal arch to the hall door, where they were received by Lord and Lady Petre. A royal levee, a grand dinner party, a concert, and a display of fireworks, filled the roll of festivity at the baronial hall ; while the loyalty of Brentwood blazed forth at night in a general illumination, as brilliant as it could be made at a time when gas as yet lay slumbering undiscovered in its heap of coal dust. The following day his Majesty reviewed the little army which lay encamped at Warley, and afterwards held a levee upon the ground for the reception of the military officers and county gentry. While this was passing upon the green turf of the common—while the cannon were thundering out in mimic fight, troops of horse flying across the plain, and columns of infantry crashing through the neighbouring woods to show royalty how a battle was lost and won—a fairy-like surprise was preparing at Thorndon Hall. At the west end of the magnificent dining-room, a noble orchestra rose as if by magic. On the front was emblazoned the royal arms, with Fame sounding her trumpet, and underneath, in large characters, were the words —“ Vivant Rex et Regina.” On each side were finely-executed portraits of their Majesties, and guardian angels crowning them with laurel. The orchestra itself was filled with artists of first-rate talent. The whole was carefully concealed till the royal

party and the other guests were seated, and the course had been served, when on the first flourish of the royal fork, the screen was suddenly removed. The fine strains of "God save the King" bursting out from the midst of this flash of light and these things of beauty, gave it the air of an enchanted scene; and general expressions of delight greeted the noble host. The King and Queen, after sleeping two nights at Thorndon Hall, took their departure on the 21st, leaving a sum of money in the hands of the Protestant clergyman of the parish for the poor, and a right royal largess for the servants of the establishment. The visit of George III. and Queen Charlotte still lingers as a proud tradition amongst some of the old retainers of the Thorndon estates.

Essex, however, beheld with gloomy dissatisfaction the progress and result of the American war. The struggle was thought by some, from the parties engaged in it, to partake of the character of civil strife.\* Goaded, too, by the burthens which it imposed, a powerful confederacy started into life to demand financial and parliamentary reform. The administration of Lord North had been weakened by the failure of the British arms, the opponents of the government had formed political associations in York and other counties; and in January, 1780, a great meeting was held for a like purpose at Chelmsford, at the instance of J. Luther, Esq., one of the members for the county; Lord Cavendish, Lord Dacre, Lord Waltham, the Rev. Charles Onley, the Rev. T. Western, the Rev. S. Disney, J. J. Tufnell, Esq., — Bullock, Esq., and about fifty other county gentlemen. At this assembly, a committee of fifty-three gentlemen was appointed to prepare the plan of an association for promoting laudable reform, and securing the freedom of parliament. The petition adopted on the occasion set forth—

"That this nation has been engaged for several years in a most expensive and unfortunate war; that many of our valuable colonies, having actually declared themselves independent, have formed a strict confederacy with France and Spain, the dangerous and inveterate enemies of Great Britain; that the consequence of those combined misfortunes has been a large addition to the national debt, a heavy accumulation of taxes, a rapid decline of the trade and manufactures, and land-rents of the kingdom. Alarmed at the diminished

\* An amusing instance of the character of some of the men engaged, and their notions of liberty, is given in an American paper of June 8, 1777, under the date of London—"A young fellow named Dawkins, who was some time since tried at Chelmsford Assize, and transported for stealing cheese, &c., has, we hear, just sent a letter to his mother, informing her the American Congress have presented him with a captain's commission. He says several other Essex patriots, who like himself were torn from their dearest connexions, and banished for their firm attachment to the cause of liberty, now rank high in the American army."

resources and growing burthens of this country, and convinced that rigid frugality is now indispensably necessary in every department of the state, your petitioners observe with grief that notwithstanding the calamitous and impoverished condition of the nation, much public money has been improvidently squandered, and that many individuals enjoy sinecure places, efficient places with exorbitant emoluments and pensions unmerited by public service, to a large and still increasing amount; whence the crown has acquired a great and unconstitutional influence, which, if not checked, may soon prove fatal to the liberties of the country."

An inquiry into gross abuses and a reduction of expenditure were therefore demanded; and subsequently the plan of reform was set out as follows:—"That a diligent examination be made into all the branches of the receipt, expenditure, and mode of keeping and passing accounts of public money, in order to obtain the plan of reform requested by the petitions of the people; that there be sent to the House of Commons, in addition to the present representatives of the counties, a number of members, not less than 100, to be chosen in due proportion by the several counties of the kingdom of Great Britain; and that the members of the House of Commons be annually elected to serve in parliament." In a declaration issued, it was set forth—"That the representation of the people in parliament has become extremely unequal, insomuch that a great majority of members is returned by decayed and indigent boroughs, which are either at the command of the crown and a few great families, or else open to general venality." A pledge was therefore taken not to support any candidate who did not sign the articles of association. This movement was denounced by the grand jury at the March assize. That body stepped out of its way to sign and publish a protest, in which it was declared, that "all popular leagues without the authority of the supreme magistracy are to be looked upon as dangerous; but when they come to bear up in defiance of it, the case is little short of a state of rebellion." Subscribed to this were the names of John Conyers, Jacob Houblon, S. M. Leake, George Pelly, Daniel Scratton, R. Haselfoot, &c. Party spirit raged furiously; still the association went actively on. Repeated county meetings were held upon the subject; deputies were sent to a convention in London, representing thirteen counties and many of the larger towns; thanks, too, were voted to Mr. Pitt for his motion on the subject of the representation; but with gradually returning prosperity, this zeal and the association died away. Then came the feelings awakened by the French revolution; and when this subject was revived with vigour in our own time, many of the Essex parliamentary reformers of 1780, or their descendants, were found on the other side.

On the 14th of August, 1789, the corner-stone of a new

Shire-hall was laid by T. B. Bramston, Esq, attended by many of the leading justices of the county; but the magistrates appear to have attached more importance to providing commodious courts of justice than to the proper care of the prisoners to be tried in them. At the summer assize of that year, Lord Chief-Justice Loughborough inflicted a fine of £500 upon the county, in consequence of the neglect of the superintendents of the gaol in not providing proper cells, as had been before suggested. This exercise of authority the Court of Quarter Session determined to resist, as extra-judicial and illegal. It was contended, upon constitutional grounds, that a judge could not come into a county, and, without a survey taken, or examination upon oath, levy a fine at pleasure. The sheriff, however, received a writ from the Exchequer, to levy the £500; and a long course of excitement and litigation followed. In November, 1791, the inhabitants of Essex, through their representatives in parliament, delivered their plea into the Court of Exchequer, setting forth—

“First, that by a statute of Henry VIII. it is enacted that no subject shall be fined or amerced who can in law or good conscience adduce facts in bar thereof. Second, that the fine on the inhabitants of Essex was not imposed in consequence of any information on oath, nor on the personal view of the judge. Third, that the justices of the peace are the only persons who have legal control over the county gaol; consequently, if any nuisance did exist therein the inhabitants are not responsible for such nuisance, because they cannot even enter such gaol without being guilty of a trespass. Fourth, that if the inhabitants had, even in this instance, been responsible, they were, by the singular mode of disposing the fine, precluded from the possibility of defence or appeal against so extraordinary a conviction. The said inhabitants of Essex therefore pray to be dismissed by his Majesty's honourable Court of Exchequer from the further process on account of the said fine.”

The Court of Quarter Session voted the sum of £150 out of the county funds to meet the expenses of these law proceedings, on which a rule was obtained in the Court of Queen's Bench to quash this order; but the rule was discharged, it being held that the magistrates had not exceeded their right, and the order was perfectly legal. The affair was brought to a close without a distinct decision on the constitutional question at issue. At the session in July the committee appointed to manage the defence of the county reported that the fine had been discharged by the Court of Exchequer, in consequence of a very unexpected affidavit and motion made by Richard Millman French Chiswell, Esq. On this the court passed a series of resolutions, expressive of their disapprobation of such a termination of the dispute. The last resolution was as follows:—

“That this court cannot terminate in a manner suitable to its importance the business which has engaged their attention more than two years without expressing the regret they feel at having been thus deprived of the opportunity

of bringing a great constitutional question to a legal decision; but they think it too clear to need explanation or argument that their endeavours to prevent the operation and consequence of the fine, both as a charge and precedent, have in reality been completely effectual, the plea still remaining on record unanswered and unimpeached."

When the French Revolution—the political "storm that shook the world"—first broke in startling flashes, and a whole people, bursting wildly from their thralldom, placed anarchy, and murder, and infidelity on the desecrated throne of liberty, the utmost efforts were made in the county to calm the agitation, and frustrate the few speculatists who began to appeal to those it is not difficult to mislead, and to passions it is easy to inflame, in favour of these disorganizing principles. When, too, Napoleon rose upon the dark and troubled scene, like a fiery comet, alarming monarchs and perplexing nations, the patriotic and military spirit of the inhabitants was aroused, and in every parish the rattle of arms and the hum of preparation for the battle were heard. A royal proclamation was issued, setting forth the danger that threatened the community, and demanding the vigilant co-operation of magistrates and people in order to avert it. Essex responded to it by forming associations for the repression of sedition. Meetings were held in every hundred and in most of the large towns, at which pledges were entered into for the preservation of order, and measures were taken for the maintenance of the public peace. The following was the declaration of Dengie hundred, issued from a public meeting at Maldon; and it conveys a fair idea of the general feeling which pervaded all these assemblies:—

"That the free and happy constitution of this country, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons, is a sacred and invaluable inheritance, which all good and faithful subjects are as much bound to defend from the secret arts of sedition as against the direct assaults of open violence. That we have observed with indignation, and will resist with all our might, the daring attempts lately made by certain levellers to disturb the public peace, for the evident purpose of seizing upon private property. That we do therefore now associate ourselves to aid the civil authority in maintaining a due submission to the laws of our country, which afford an equitable protection to all ranks of his Majesty's subjects. That we pledge ourselves to enquire diligently into the conduct of the constables within our parishes, with an intent that if any one should be found neglectful of the duty he has sworn to discharge he may be exemplarily punished as the law directs. That as parochial tumults generally arise in public-houses, we are determined to point out every publican in our respective parishes as unfit to obtain a license who does not exert himself to preserve good order in his house, and on all occasions endeavour to secure the king's peace."

These vigorous measures proved effectual. Those who had at first sympathized with the actors in the revolution were partially silenced by the mad and ferocious excesses into which they afterwards ran. Sedition found no abiding resting-place here, though it hovered for a time within the dark shadow of famine,



which was seen at the door of the cottager and the mechanic; and wheat became so excessively dear that the necessary and accustomed loaf began to be almost beyond the reach of the poor. Tumults took place at Colchester, at Braintree, and at Saffron Walden. The people were so excited by inflammatory speeches made to them, that two troops of horse were called in to curb the mob. Wagons, with their full sacks, were intercepted and rifled on their way to the mill or the vessel of the merchant. In 1795 and 1796 the scarcity was so great that black bread began to make its appearance even at the tables of the well-to-do and the wealthy. Committees were formed and subscriptions raised in the various parishes to supply the quartern loaf, partly made of barley flour, to the working classes at 6d.; and, at the Quarter Sessions, official steps were taken to induce voluntary economy in the homes of the rich. At a meeting of millers and magistrates, in June, 1794, it was resolved that only one sort of flour should be made, by separating the bran only, at the rate of seven pounds to the bushel, from the meal; and to set an example to the poor, the judges and grand jury at the assize ate only of this bread. Again, in January, 1796, resolutions were passed by the leading magistrates and the grand jury, and extensively published throughout the county, stating that, "impressed with a sense of the evils which may be experienced by his Majesty's subjects in consequence of a deficient supply of wheat, unless timely and effectual measures are taken to reduce the consumption thereof," they pledged themselves, and earnestly urged the same course upon others, to use in their families only mixed bread—that is, bread made of one-third barley, or with a certain proportion of bran in it, and to altogether prohibit the use of wheaten flour in pastry. This was generally adopted. The high price continued for some years. In July, 1800, the quartern loaf was 17d.; in January, 1801, 1s. 8d.; in February, flour was 6s. 9d. the peck; in March, 7s., or 1s. 10½d. the quartern loaf. In August it began to fall, and at one period in 1804, the quartern loaf was as low as 7½d.; but in 1805 it went up again. In these times of extreme dearth, brown and barley-bread was the common food of the poor. The pure white loaf, which is now to be found at the humblest table, was a luxury seldom seen in the cottage, and was stealthily indulged in as a contraband article by the delicate dweller in the squire's mansion or the dainty denizens of the servants' hall.

England had now become thoroughly engaged in the war against France. As the wild spirit of the republic, drunk with the blood shed at the guillotine, began to indulge in menaces



and notions of conquest, this county joined liberally in the measures necessary for the common defence, quickened perhaps by the fact that their own hearth-stones were likely to be the first desecrated in case of invasion. The coast of Essex, should the enemy attempt a hostile landing upon our island home, was expected to be a principal point of attack. The government, therefore, directed peculiar attention to the strengthening of the weak parts, and providing adequately for the defence of this part of the kingdom. All the barracks overflowed with soldiers, temporary buildings being provided for three thousand in Chelmsford. Clouds of red-coats were to be seen hovering about most of the large village greens—large camps being established at Warley, Danbury, Rettendon, Galleywood, Epping, Tiptree, on the Clacton shore, at Læxden, and other places. Quarter-masters were sent down to engage all the barns, granaries, and other large buildings about Maldon, for bodies of troops to be spread along that part of the coast; while engineers were engaged upon defences to command all the rivers and creeks from Bradwell down to Mersea Island. Earth-works were thrown up and guns mounted across the line of country which it was supposed would be the path selected by an invader. Ten large men-of-war, two brigs, and two gunboats were stationed along the coast for its protection. The commons were converted into camps, the village cricket fields into drill grounds; and so urgent was this military work considered that we find the Bishop of London issuing a notice that he had postponed his visitation in the county, “because it would interfere with the military preparations.” The regiments of militia were called out and employed on permanent duty in various parts of the kingdom—the inhabitants of the county coming voluntarily forward and subscribing a large sum for increasing this old constitutional force, more than £10,000 being at once raised at a county meeting held for the purpose at Chelmsford. Afterwards the supplemental, and then the local, militia were created and called out, the latter, from which even apprentices were not exempt, being trained in its particular districts. Meetings were held and voluntary contributions in aid of the government raised in almost every parish. A large sum was thus poured into the public treasury to add greater vigour to the war, and to show the enemy that the lives and fortunes of the people were at the service of the state. Military associations sprung up, under the sanction of the lord-lieutenant, in most of the towns and districts. A crack corps of volunteers, the Essex Light Dragoons, was raised by Montague Burgoyne, Esq., at his own expense, in 1796. The yeomanry, in approval

of this patriotism, purchased and presented the standards, which for years during the war were unfurled in Ireland and elsewhere, the corps cheerfully serving wherever government and duty called. Colchester organized and armed a powerful force of its spirited inhabitants. Chelmsford had its troops of yeomanry cavalry and its companies of volunteer infantry. Then, too, sprung into martial being the Coggeshall and Kelvedon volunteers, whose memory is embalmed in many a stale joke and worn-out witticism. Witham, Maldon, Braintree, and the other towns had their bands of local warriors. In almost every parish a corps numbering from 40 to 100 was raised. Lord Petre roused his tenantry, and marshalled them, with the respectable householders of Brentwood, Ingatestone, and the neighbouring parishes, into infantry corps, with two bodies of pioneers, provided with carriages, horses, drivers, and implements. Sir William Hillary, of Danbury Park, raised the Essex Legion, which consisted of 1,000 men, including a troop of cavalry, formed of the yeomanry of Dengie hundred. Various others followed this example. The military spirit ran through the halls and homesteads, the counting houses and workshops, of the inhabitants.

"Gallia's menace fired their blood ;  
With one heart and voice they rose ;  
Hand-to-hand the heroes stood,  
And defied their country's foes."

It is the fashion in these days of peace and security to smile at the amateur and home-made soldier. It was not so, however, in those times of peril, when there was the prospect of our fathers' slumbers being broken by the roar of hostile cannon, and the possibility of their being startled in their rural walk by the glitter of French bayonets behind the next hedge-row. Nor can it be questioned that men who sharpened their swords upon their own hearth-stones, and would direct their volleys from behind their garden walls, would have presented a formidable check to even the veterans of the expected invader.

In the midst of this enthusiasm, however, there was occasionally heard a growl of dissatisfaction. In the dark days of 1795, a public meeting was got up at Colchester, when it was urged by the few malecontents that our commerce was crippled, our manufactures at a stand, the poor in the most abject situation, famine ready to seize upon us, our forces beaten, and the French triumphant in Holland, so that we might reasonably expect them to make a descent on this island ; and as the Dutch knew the Essex coast as well as ourselves, this county would certainly be made the first object of the enemy's ravages. Therefore, it was argued, his majesty ought to be implored to

make peace. It was a gloomy picture, and not without touches of truth. But the martial spirit rallied, and protested against "leading the British lion fettered to the bar of the French convention, to be crowned with their bloody cap." The advocates of submission were overwhelmed; and an address went up to the throne couched in a more hopeful and manly spirit.

Schemes of resistance, approaching to the desperate, were adopted by the government. It was resolved that if the invader should succeed in effecting a landing, he should be left to march through a desert—through farms without food or fodder, towns without shelter or inhabitants—to find desolated lands and burning houses. It was determined, in fact, to enact on a small scale the sacrifice which, years afterwards, and in the pride of his power, baffled the design's and broke the spirit of Napoleon at Moscow. Accordingly, at a meeting of the deputy-lieutenants of the county, held in April, 1798, Lord Braybrooke, as lord-lieutenant, communicated the following plan he had received from the Secretary of State, for driving off the live stock, and rendering the body of the people instrumental in general defence:—

"If an enemy should land upon our shores, every possible exertion should be made immediately to deprive him of the means of subsistence. The navy will soon cut off his communication with the sea, the army will confine him on shore in such a way as to make it impossible for him to draw any supplies from the adjacent country. In this situation he will be forced to lay down his arms, or to give battle on such disadvantageous terms as can leave no doubt of his being defeated.

"But if unforeseen and improbable circumstances should enable him to make some progress at first, a steady perseverance in the same system will increase his difficulties at every step; sooner or later he must inevitably pay the forfeit of his temerity. How much the accomplishment of this object will be facilitated by driving away the live stock, and consuming, or in case of absolute necessity, destroying all other means of subsistence, in those parts of the country which may be in imminent danger of falling into his possession, is too evident to need any discussion. The only question is, how to effect this purpose with the greatest celerity and order, and with the least possible injury to individuals. To this end a well-digested plan is obviously indispensable. In clearing the country likely to be in this situation, the first principle is an indemnification from the community at large to the individuals for the value of all stock which may be removed in consequence of invasion, if not restored to the respective owners; as also for whatever moveable property may be destroyed by our own arms to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy, provided the proprietor comes forward and enters into such arrangements as may be proposed to preserve it, either by personal attendance at the time, or otherwise, in some mode of service at the moment of invasion. It must at the same time be very clearly understood that no indemnification whatever can be allowed for any property destroyed either by our own arms, or by the enemy, if it should appear that no previous preparation or exertion had been made use of to remove it: and that all property left in this state is to be destroyed, if necessary, to prevent its falling into the enemy's hands."

The county was accordingly organized for this work. Those

who shrunk from the musket and had no ambition to become men at arms, were enrolled for the humble duty of cattle drivers and destroyers. In this attitude Essex awaited the foe. The alarm and the martial feeling were kept alive by the marching and counter-marching of the troops, the occasional illuminations for naval victories, and the passage to the metropolis of the fugitives who fled before the conquering arms of those who threatened us. In 1795 the expelled Prince Stadtholder landed at Harwich, and being joined by the Princess at Colchester, where they stopped some days at the mansion of Mr. Boggis, the royal pair, as illustrious victims of the war, were received with outbursts of popular enthusiasm at the various towns in their progress to London. At Chelmsford the military were all under arms; and the populace met the carriage at Springfield, and drew it to the Black Boy Hotel. Here the royal fugitives slept for the night; and on their departure the next day they were drawn to the outskirts of the town with as much enthusiasm as if honour was being paid to a conqueror instead of a Prince who had just escaped from the vengeance of a revolted people. Profusion, however, was not amongst the failings of the Prince; for though he seems to have taken tolerably good care of himself in his flight, as his baggage filled nine wagons, and that of the Princess eight wagons and two carts, he scattered no largess in his course; and, says the diary of a disappointed townsman, who appeared astonished at his meanness, "he left nothing for the ringers."

In the short deceptive peace of 1802 the county began hurriedly to lay down its arms. The militia were disbanded. The volunteers sheathed their swords and retired from the muster and the drill to repose upon their laurels. The camps were broken up, and some of the barracks were left empty. The peaceful calm, however, was of short continuance. Scarcely had the peasant returned to his plough, and the mechanic, undisturbed by war's alarms, to his quiet occupation, than the war was resumed with fresh fury, and the spectre form of invasion again haunted the Essex dwellings. The militia, which then consisted of three regiments, the East, West, and South, was re-embodied; the cavalry volunteer again grasped his sabre, and the infantry man his musket or his pitchfork—for in this primitive manner were some of them armed by order of the government, for lack of a sufficient supply of fire-arms. Again the various local corps tendered their aid in defence of the county and marched to their drill-grounds, the services of most of them being accepted; but the total number of volunteers for Essex was limited to 7,464,

being regulated by their proportion to the militia. From some cause the offer of Lord Petre to re-embody the force he had before raised was twice refused. In July, 1803, a meeting of the deputy-lieutenants was held at Chelmsford, when, in accordance with the directions of the commander-in-chief, the county was portioned into divisions, with a deputy-lieutenant over each, who nominated a superintendent in every parish "to produce order and method, so that each one might assist according to his individual means and capacity." In pursuance of this some of the inhabitants were enrolled as cattle drivers; others as guides; others again as pioneers, to open up roads for the army, or to block them against the enemy; and the different bodies of trained volunteers received instructions to act as guerillas, availing themselves of their thorough knowledge of the ground to harass, annoy, and fatigue the enemy by constant flying attacks and alarms, without coming to any regular engagement. Dunmow was fixed upon as a general military hospital, and two hundred tons of medical stores were lodged there for the sick and wounded. Fortifications were raised in various parts of the county. Barracks were erected at Rettendon to protect the head of the Crouch. Grim batteries frowned on Chelmsford from the top of Long-Stomps, and entrenchments extended from Galleywood Common to Widford, with redoubts commanding the high-road to London. Everywhere were heard—

"The ringing fife and drum,  
Martial tramp and battle hum."

Flags were prepared to telegraph from the steeples of the churches the landing and approach of the invader. Beacons, built up of straw, fagots, and tar-barrels, to warn the county of his presence by night, were erected on the hill-tops at Colchester, Wigborough, Danbury, Laindon Hills, Corme Green, Ongar Park, Good Easter, Wethersfield, and Littlebury Broom; and farmers were requested not to allow weeds or haulm to be burnt in their fields, lest it should produce unfounded alarm. A signal house was built on the cliff at Southend to communicate with Sheerness and the admiral's ship at the Nore; as Laindon Hills, it was understood, was a position marked out for occupation by the enemy, Marshal Saxe, in his time having asserted that he would undertake with 10,000 men to hold it for six weeks against any force that could be brought against him. Occasionally privateers, which at this period were busy on the seas, brought their rich prizes into Harwich; and the half-pirate sailors might be seen scattering their money with their accustomed recklessness on the high road to London, spreading

at the same time wild tales of the invader's preparations. Towards the autumn of that year the attack was daily, nay, hourly expected; and to calm the people a notification was published that, according to the information of reconnoiterers and spies, the landing was not likely to be attempted for three weeks. In September the Duke of York inspected the Loyal Colchester volunteers, under Colonel Bawtree, and the East Essex volunteer cavalry. Then, proceeding to Chelmsford, his Royal Highness reviewed a fine body of a thousand volunteer horsemen, comprising the following—1st troop of Essex cavalry, Captain Conyers; 2nd, Captain Tufnell; 3rd, Captain, Houblon; 4th, Captain Lord Maynard; 5th, Captain Burgoyne; the West Essex troop, Captain Wright; the Loyal Havering, Captain Newman; the Uttlesford and Clavering, Captain Raynsford; the Halsted, Captain Sparrow; the Epping Foresters, Captain Rigg; the Barstable and Chafford, Captain Sir T. B. Lennard; the Freshwell, Captain A. Taylor; the Haverhill, Captain R. P. Todd; and the Wakering, Captain J. Asplin. The total volunteer cavalry in the county at this time numbered 1,251, composed of the gentry and yeomanry, all well mounted and armed. The infantry numbered 6,335, including the volunteer corps of Chelmsford, the Essex Fencibles, the Great Burstead, Ongar Hundred, Witham Rifles, commanded by Captain Miller; Bocking and Braintree, 200 in strength; Barking, Waltham Abbey, Romford, Thaxted, Woodford, Dedham, Chingford, Dunmow, Hinckford, under Captain Majendie; Saffron Walden, Kelvedon, under Captain Western; Tendring Hundred, Great Clacton, Rochford Hundred, Roxwell, Writtle, Baddow, and all the other considerable parishes; so that most of the able male population were under some sort of military training.

Soon after the visit of the duke, warrants were sent to the lord-lieutenant, and orders issued that on the approach of danger all horses likely to fall into the enemy's hands should be killed or hamstrung; the axle-trees of all wagons, vans, and carts cut asunder, and all cattle and corn destroyed. This state of organization was maintained for some years; but after a time the clouds of war rolled in other directions, and gradually the alarm died away, till at length the victory of Waterloo crushed the power that had menaced us, and brought peace and security to our homes. The relics of this time of peril are now fast fading away. The wooden legs of the old war are worn out. Here and there the stalwart form of the volunteer of 1803 may be seen, with trembling arm and tottering tread; but by a strange turn in the wheel of circumstances



he has lived to grasp in friendship the hand that threatened us, and a Bonaparte reigns in France.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### FUNERAL OF QUEEN CAROLINE—THE REFORM BILL—THE CORN LAW CONTEST.



THE events which have agitated the country since that period are, perhaps, yet too fresh to belong properly to history. Many of the actors in them are still living. The passions and prejudices which warmed them in the controversies have cooled down, but are not yet so fully extinguished as to permit the sentence to follow the summing up of circumstances, and an impartial analyzation of motives to accompany a sober review of facts. Even the sad scene which passed over the coffin of the unhappy Queen Caroline is not sufficiently embrowned by time to be pictured in its true colours without exposing the limner to the charge of partizanship. The current of our narrative, however, forbids us to leave these events unrecorded.

In April, 1795, the Princess Caroline of Brunswick, on her way to London, to be linked to a royal spendthrift as a penalty—for so he regarded it—for the national payment of his debts, was fog-bound for a day off Harwich, where it was expected she would land; and the people of Essex were prepared to welcome the fair German, in the freshness of her youth and the fulness of her hope, with universal enthusiasm—to harness themselves to her carriage wheels, and speed them onward to that nuptial couch which proved so cold and thorny. In 1821, after a life of neglect, contumely, and persecution—it may be of indiscretion, but few now believe of guilt—the sun which at its rising Essex was prepared to worship had set in darkness; and the royal corpse on its way to the tomb was received with coldness by many, or amidst the contentions of party, which continued to war even with the solemn dead. The people, as they are popularly called, evinced their sympathy by gathering in thousands round the hearse, but a great portion of the gentry and clergy stood aloof and frowned upon it as it passed. On the 18th of August, the funeral procession, which consisted of a number of officials and military, the hearse and thirteen mourning coaches, left London; but in consequence of a contest with the populace, who insisted on its passing through the city, it did not enter Essex till night. From Stratford to Romford excited crowds assembled at all the cross roads, and at these places filled the streets. An effort was made at



the latter town to prevent the tolling of the bell ; but through the spirit of one of the churchwardens, this ordinary mark of respect for death was duly observed. The body did not reach Chelmsford, where the multitude had been waiting from the afternoon, some slumbering on window sills and at the street corners, till half-past three the following morning. It was received without much ceremony by the officials, but with every mark of solemn respect by the multitude, and it was deposited for a few hours in the church under a military guard. It then proceeded onward. Crowds again were assembled at Witham ; and at Kelvedon the late Lord Western, on horseback, followed by all his tenantry, and also the late Peter Du Cane, Esq. and his tenantry, met the procession and accompanied it to Colchester. Here a scene of unseemly tumult, riot, and an actual struggle over the coffin, occurred. The friends of the deceased queen, Alderman Wood, the father of the present vicar of Cressing, Mr. Wilde and Dr. Lushington, the executors, the Rev. J. P. Wood, her Majesty's chaplain and private secretary (the present baronet), had accompanied the corpse of her by whom they had so chivalrously and unflinchingly stood in life ; and when it had been deposited in St. Runwald's church, Dr. Lushington announced his intention of affixing to the coffin a plate bearing an inscription her Majesty herself had dictated — " Caroline of Brunswick, the injured Queen of England, departed this life 7th of August, in the year of our Lord, 1821, aged 53 years." An unseemly discussion ensued between Dr. Lushington and the Rev. J. P. Wood, the chaplain, on one side, and the opponents of the queen and admirers of George IV. on the other. The aisles, the doors, and passages, were blocked up by the populace, who hemmed in those who had official charge of the body, so that they were unable to extricate themselves, and could only protest at a distance against the proceedings. Amidst the wildest uproar and contention a man employed as a cabinet-maker in the town mounted on the coffin and affixed the plate. After Dr. Lushington had retired, however, it was torn off ; two men who had been set to guard it were expelled by force ; and a plate with a Latin inscription was substituted with the sanction of Naylor, king-at-arms. The next morning the cortege proceeded on its way amidst the excited feeling of the people, and followed by a solitary carriage with hack horses—the only mark of respect which the Colchester gentry paid to their queen. At Harwich the body was met at the entrance of the town by a party of infantry, but the procession was conducted in a manner so dis-

orderly, that it is stated to have excited astonishment and indignation. The horse of the undertaker was lame; those which drew the hearse had no plumes; the escutcheons were removed; the crimson velvet was rent from the coffin. Thus shabbily treated, dust-covered, and travel-worn, the royal coffin was hurried direct to the pier. The beach was filled with spectators, the river covered with boats; and amidst the solemn notes of the "Dead March," and the mournful fluttering of the half-lowered colours of the ships in the harbour, it was embarked for the vault at Brunswick. Soon after Lord and Lady Hood, Lady Ann Hamilton, the Rev. J. P. Wood, the chaplain, and others, proceeded to the funeral squadron, the Glasgow frigate, the Gannet, and the Wye, and the vessels sailed. Thus closed the sad page of party strife and womanly suffering—the saddest perhaps to be found in the history of the first half of the nineteenth century.

The county was deeply stirred by the storm of agitation which swept over the kingdom in the struggle for the Reform Bill; but happily, though words were fierce and many, the brick-bat and the bludgeon, which were resorted to elsewhere, were not the kind of arguments employed here. The bill was introduced into the House of Commons on the 1st of March, 1831. Mr. Wellesley had appeared upon the ground as a liberal; and in April meetings in support of the measure were held throughout the county. On the 20th of that month the bill was defeated by a majority of 8; and parliament was dissolved. The opponents of the bill in Essex immediately put forth a declaration, signed by nearly 150 of the influential gentlemen of the party, in which, although they admitted that the alteration of time and circumstances called for some revision of the representation of the people, they entered a solemn protest against the government measure as too violent an interference with existing institutions, and an unexampled violation of personal and chartered rights. The popular tide, however, ran too strong for them; and it swept away some of their stoutest champions. The county election took place in May. The contest was fiercely maintained; but at the close of the sixth day's poll Colonel Tyrell retired, the numbers being—Mr. Western 2,367; Mr. Wellesley 2,250; Colonel Tyrell 1,707. At Colchester Mr. D. W. Harvey and Mr. Mayhew, both liberals, were elected, Mr. Sanderson retiring beaten on the fourth day. Maldon returned Mr. Barrett Lennard and Mr. Dick, without opposition. Harwich sent up the Right Honourables J. O. Herries and G. R. Dawson, both of whom had voted against the bill. Thus, of its eight members, Essex sent five to

support reform. Still the battle was not won. On the 7th of October, the Reform Bill, which had passed the Commons, was rejected in the Lords by a majority of 41. Then burst the full storm of popular feeling in the county. Men, and the middle classes especially, appeared to have imbibed the notion that reform in the representation would bring down in a shower every earthly blessing, and that a tide of milk and honey was to overflow the land. They were furious on finding the cup dashed from their lips. The murmurs and remonstrances of the other side could scarcely be heard amidst the howling of the political hurricane. The leaders of the party called upon Wm. Davis, Esq. the High Sheriff, to convene a county meeting to assist in the coercion of the Lords ; but he declined. A requisition then went through town and village and farm-house and hamlet, and it was sent up to the head of the county with 1,580 signatures—the largest number, perhaps, ever appended to any similar document in Essex—sufficient it was thought to completely overwhelm all his official scruples and objections. Still he was inexorable. The meeting was therefore convened by Lord Petre, Sir T. B. Lennard, Mr. Western, and others. It was held on the 10th of December, and from it there went up a declaration setting forth that the peers had exercised the legislative power they held in trust for the people to the disappointment of the people's hopes, and endangering all the institutions of the state—that no measure of reform less comprehensive would be satisfactory ; and expressing full confidence in the exercise of the royal prerogative if necessary. Three days after the bill was re-introduced into the House of Commons, and the second reading was carried by two to one. On the 7th of May, in the following year, however, it was again rejected by the Lords ; and again there was a rattling of the cogs and wheels of the reform machinery which revolved furiously in every district of the county. Public meetings were held ; petitions and addresses went flying up to parliament and the throne. At length, as it is known, through this kind of pressure from without, and a little coercion from within, the Lords passed the bill, which received the royal assent on the 7th of June. Parliament was then dissolved, and the Essex elections under the new system took place in December. The result was scarcely what had been expected by those who had laboured so hard for the bill. In the langour which followed their excited efforts, or from too exalted notions of the certain effect of what had been done—or, as the other side maintained, from the sobering of the people after this fit of intoxication, they sunk back into the minority, and their opponents who had been

beaten in the battle, rallied, and seized upon the larger number of the seats. The county, which before had returned two members elected at Chelmsford exclusively by the votes of the freeholders, was divided into two divisions, the north and south. and tides of new voters were let in. The boundaries of the boroughs had been extended; and a new element introduced, which was declared to be pure and popular. But when the roll of the county came to be called, it was found that of the ten members elected, six of them were conservatives. In North Essex, Mr. C. Western, the Nestor of liberalism and reform, was rejected, being afterwards consoled by a splendid piece of plate and a peerage; and Sir John Tyrrell, the defeated candidate of the year before, was placed at the head of the poll, with the tory Mr. Baring (the late Lord Ashburton) as his colleague. The numbers on the poll were—Sir John Tyrell, 2,448; Mr. Baring, 2,280; Mr. Western, 2,244; Mr. Brand, 1,840. In the south, the liberals returned one member, but it was at the expense of Mr. Wellesley. The poll stood as follows—Mr. Hall Dare, 2,087; Sir T. B. Lennard, 1,538; Mr. Wellesley, 1,432. At Maldon, Mr. Barrett Lennard, and Mr. Quintin Dick, a liberal and a conservative, were returned, Mr. Peter Wright, the second liberal, lagging full 150 behind upon the poll. At Colchester, Mr. Sanderson was reinstated in his seat, in company with Mr. D. W. Harvey; he stood on the poll 234 above that popular reformer, and 372 over Mr. Mayhew. Harwich elected Mr. Herries (conservative) and Mr. Tower (liberal), rejecting Mr. Leader and Mr. Disney. The reformers attributed their lowered position in the county to the Chandos £50 clause, which gave a preponderance to the agricultural tenantry; but this did not operate in the boroughs; and in 1841 we find the banquet spread in a splendid pavilion at Chelmsford, to celebrate the return of the conservative ten, and the extinguishment of the yellow hue in the representation—so little had the reform bill done here to increase the political power of those who assisted to pass it.

The county was again universally agitated in the contest on the repeal of the corn laws. The mandate had gone forth from Manchester for the abolition of those laws; the great league was fast overshadowing the land. In the efforts to stem its power Essex bethought itself of organizing the strength of the agriculturists; and under the presidency and guidance of Mr. Robert Baker, of Writtle, the Protection Society sprung into vigorous being. The hint was taken in other counties, and a great Central Association resulted from this movement. There was a good deal of farmer-like energy and earnestness

about the Essex Protection Society, and the work it had to do it did well. It raised by public subscription nearly £5,000. It asserted the principles of protection through the public meeting and the press. It assailed free trade in the petition, at the market table, and in the after-dinner speech. It entertained Lord George Bentinck, the clever improvised leader of the party, at a great banquet in the Chelmsford Shire Hall. It presented, at another public dinner, on the 6th of June, 1845, a silver salver, and a purse of 300 sovereigns, to Mr. Baker, its leader, in recognition of his services. But it was a struggle against fate. The principles of repeal marched steadily onward; and Essex after all assisted in giving the last kick to the Corn Laws. Mr. Cobden had been defied by Sir John Tyrell to come into the county and discuss the subject. He came; but with the privilege of the challenged, he adroitly flung himself into the midst of the town population of Colchester, where the agricultural element was overwhelmed, and he carried a resolution "that it is the opinion of this meeting that the Corn Laws, and every other law that favours one class of the community at the expense of other classes, is injurious and unjust to the country at large; and further, they are injurious to commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, and ought to be forthwith abolished." Emboldened by this experiment, he appeared at Chelmsford, where he was unopposed, and there he obtained a similar verdict. When the great league leader returned to London with these two resolutions in his pocket, passed in a county which was a stronghold of agriculture, and the birthplace of the protection societies, there is no doubt they had a considerable influence on the mind of Sir Robert Peel, who was just then hesitating and balancing himself for the final plunge. The corn laws were repealed; but perhaps, from fortuitous circumstances, we behold not yet the uncultivated fields, and the dreary sheep-walks in which we were told during the contest, the half-starved inhabitants of the county would be left to wander.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE CIVIL, MILITARY, AND ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT OF THE COUNTY—PLACES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

THE general government of the county, which, as far as local matters are concerned, assumes the character of a little commonwealth, is carried on by the sheriff, the lord-lieutenant, and the magistracy—the latter, perhaps, assembled in quarter sessions, exercising most of the sub-

stantial power, from the duty entrusted to them of levying rates, and the command they have of the public purse.

Originally—that is, from the earliest times of which we have any record, after the breaking up of the Heptarchy—the civil government appears to have been in the Earl of Essex. This officer possessed power as governor of the county before the conquest. He exercised his authority by the holding of courts; and he received the third penny of all fines, and other perquisites, from which he drew a considerable revenue. At this period the sheriff was merely the deputy of the earl; but he has long since superseded his chief, and the earldom of Essex, become purely titular, confers no more power in the county than the patent of any other peer.

The office of sheriff is a very ancient one. It appears to have been instituted by King Alfred when he first divided England into counties, for the purpose of checking the crimes and barbarism of the people, and establishing good government and order. At first there was but one sheriff for Essex and Herts; and we find Suene, who it has been seen figured largely in the county records, Geoffery de Mandeville, and Ibert de Hertford, exercising this power in the time of the Norman. At this period the sheriff held his office without any limit as to time, and was only removed when it suited the views or whim of the sovereign, or for some flagrant act on his part. In several reigns the yearly appointment of sheriffs followed with some regularity; but it was not till the 14th of Edward III., (1340,) that the office was made by law an annual one. It was then provided, with the view no doubt, of enlisting the nobility and gentry on the side of order, that the honor and responsibility should be conferred upon the several families in the county according to rotation. It was therefore enacted:—

“That no sheriff shall tary in his balewick over one year, and then another convenient shall be ordained in his place, (that hath land sufficient in his balewick) by the chancellor, treasurer, and chief baron of the exchequer, taking to them the chief justices of the one bench, and of the other, if they be present; and that shall be done yearly on the day after All Soules’ day, that is the 3d of November, at the exchequer.”

The first sheriff under this law appears to have been a Hertfordshire man—Wm. atte-Moore, of Gobions, North Mymms; and on looking down the list for the next six reigns, we see few names which are to be found preserved in the roll of the Essex gentry of the present day—to such an extent have estates been alienated, titles changed, and great families extinguished in the last five centuries. John Tyrrell, Esq., of Herongate, was sheriff in the second of Henry V., and the name

of this family often appears subsequently; John Fortescue, Esq., of Rivenhall, served in the 22nd of Edward IV.; and Thos. Mildmay, Esq., of Chelmsford, in the 6th of Mary. In the 9th of Elizabeth, those selected acted as sheriffs of Essex alone; and the roll of these officers from that period will be given in an appendix. The sheriff takes precedence of all persons in the county. He presides at elections and county meetings; summons jurymen, and attends the judges at assizes. He is charged with defending the county from riot and rebellion, and invasion, for which purpose he may assemble the *posse comitatus*—that is, all persons over 15 years, to assist; but he is forbidden to act as a magistrate during his year of office. He seizes lands which fall to the crown, levies fines, executes writs from the superior courts, and is responsible for the execution of criminals; but all these latter duties are discharged by the under-sheriff, who is appointed as his deputy.

Immediately under the sheriff are the high constables—the bailiffs, in fact, of the Hundreds, who in olden times were officers of great importance. It is stated by some writers that at one period they exercised very much the same power as the present justices of the peace; and even at a more recent period they were, with the petty constables chosen in court leet and parish under their control, to a great extent charged with the suppression of tumults and the maintenance of law and order in their districts. There are two of them in each hundred of the county, except Witham, which appoints but one, and Hinckford, which from its larger extent has three; but since the establishment of the general police force, their duties have dwindled down to the mere formalities connected with the levying of the county rate.

The magistrates are now the officers to whom the rule of the county commonwealth is entrusted. The old manor courts, with their rights of gallows and pillory and trial of offenders, have passed away. Some of the other officers merely walk the stage as honorary ghosts of former days. The justices of the peace, however, not only administer the law in their respective districts, but in their little local parliament of the quarter session, the gaols, the county bridges, the public asylums, all the public buildings and property of the county, and nearly all the officers, are under their control. They pull down and build up; pass resolutions which, to a certain extent, have the effect of enacted laws; and levy taxes equal to the incomes of some independent continental states. The office of justice of the peace dates back a thousand years or more. The learned differ as to its first institution; but it appears to have been of Saxon origin,



since we find that king Alfred associated the Eirenarchæ, as they were then called, to act with the sheriffs for the suppression of notorious robbers; and Ingulphus says that by their care and industry, "the whole kingdom in a short time enjoyed so great peace that if any traveller had let fall a sum of money never so late in the evening either in the fields or public highways, if he came next morning, or even a month after, he should find it whole and untouched"—an exaggeration of the old writer, we presume, intended to convey figuratively an idea of the caution which the strict administration of justice had taught men to exercise in meddling with that which was not their own. These officers do not, however, appear to have been appointed regularly and generally till the time of Edward III., in 1327, when it was enacted "that in every county good men and lawful, which be no maintainers of evil or baretters in the county, shall be assigned to keep the peace;" and by another statute of the same monarch it was provided that "in every county of England shall be assigned for the keeping of the peace, one lord, and with him three or four of the most worthy in the county, with some learned in the law." The justices are appointed by the sovereign by commission under the great seal, generally on the recommendation of the lord lieutenant.

The present number in the county is 253, and their general courts of session for the management of the financial and other affairs, and the trial of prisoners and appeals, are presided over by J. M. Leake, C. G. Round, N. C. Barnardiston, and T. C. Chisenhale Marsh, Esqrs., who have all been educated as barristers; with William Gibson, Esq., the clerk of the peace, as their legal adviser; so that at present the county has all the advantage which it could derive from the system of paid chairmen appointed by the government.

The power of the sword in the county is entrusted to the lord-lieutenant, as the head of the militia, the appointment of the officers vesting in him; and occasionally he has assumed the active command of the regiments. The time when this high officer was first instituted is matter of doubt. Most of the power which he now possesses was given to him by Henry VIII. Some writers assert that he was introduced in that reign to keep the counties in military order on the suppression of the convents: that he was, in fact, an officer called into being only in times of difficulty and danger. Certain, however, it is that, for the last two centuries and a half, they have followed in regular succession. The first of whom record has been preserved is John, Lord Petre, and he was followed by Thomas Darcy, Lord Viscount Colchester, in 1641; Robert Rich, Earl

of Warwick ; George Monk, Duke of Albemarle ; Christopher, his son ; and in the last century, Henry Howard, Earl of Suffolk ; Charles William Howard, Earl of Suffolk ; Henry O'Brian, Earl of Thomond ; Benj. Mildmay, Earl Fitzwalter ; William Henry Zulersten de Nassau, Earl of Rochford ; and Lord Braybrooke. The present holder of the office is Lord Viscount Maynard, who is also *custos rotulorum*, or keeper of the rolls, and vice-admiral of the county—offices merely nominal ; and there are 117 deputy lieutenants, generally the gentlemen in the magistracy, who occasionally hold courts for business connected with the militia, and are entitled to wear a military uniform.

Anciently the coroner took a considerable share in the public business of the county. The origin of the office is lost in the mist which hangs about long-past ages ; but it is considered to be at least coeval with that of the sheriff, with whom the coroner ranked in dignity, and it was undoubtedly a Saxon institution. The statute of the 3d of Edward I. provided that "through all shires sufficient men shall be chosen to be coroner of the most wise and discreet knights, which know, will, and may best attend upon such offices." Formerly a part of the royal justiciary power was delegated to this officer. He heard and determined certain civil and criminal pleas ; was always the judge, and pronounced the sentence of outlawry. The coroner is still, by virtue of his office, a conservator of the peace, but he is elected by the freeholders of the county under a writ from the crown. The county is at present divided into two districts ; William Codd, Esq., being coroner for the northern, and O. C. Lewis, Esq., for the southern, division. Their duties are now limited to inquiries into violent and sudden deaths, causes of fire, and cases of shipwreck ; but their courts are courts of record, from which they can exclude any person. They can commit for contempt, and compel witnesses to attend and give evidence. They are entitled to fees of 20s. and 6s. 8d. for each inquest, and 9d. a mile for travelling expenses, which are paid out of the county rates.

In all ecclesiastical matters the county is now governed by the Lord Bishop of Rochester, the officers under him being the archdeacons and the rural deans. From the first introduction of the system of christianity into the island, certainly from the times of the Heptarchy, Essex was in the diocese of London ; and it continued so down to the year 1836, when the pastoral rule of the millions of the metropolis, with the teeming vice and the almost pagan ignorance which prevail in the heart of English

civilization, and around the thresholds of learning, luxury, and art, was found sufficient to demand all the energy and watchfulness of one prelate. Essex was therefore cut off from its olden diocese, with the exception of ten parishes—Barking, Chingford, East and West Ham, Great and Little Ilford, Leyton, Walthamstow, Wanstead, and Woodford. These continue in the diocese of London. All the other part of the county, containing 418 parishes and chapelries, was transferred to the see of Rochester; and the episcopal residence was removed from Bromley, in Kent, to Danbury, the former residence of John Round Esq., being purchased by the ecclesiastical commissioners for a palace. Formerly Dunmow, Harlow, and Hedingham, parishes wide apart, were in the archdeaconry of Middlesex, as if flung at random into that jurisdiction; but now the county is nearly equally divided between the two archdeacons. The Venerable Hugh Chambres Jones is archdeacon of Essex, and his rule extends over the following district:—

Deaneries.	Rural Deans.	Deaneries.	Rural Deans.
Barstable .	Rev. John H. Stephenson	Harlow . .	Rev. Henry Palmer
Billericay .	Rev. John Pearson	Ingatestone	Rev. Wm. Brown Dalton
Canewdon .	Rev. John Aubone Cook	Lambourne	Rev. James Goodwin
Chafford .	Rev. Thomas Ludbey	Maldon . .	Rev. William Holland
Chelmsford	Rev. Carew Anthony St. John Mildmay	Ongar . .	Ven. Archdeacon Tattam
Danbury .	Rev. William Kemble	Orsett . .	Rev. James Blomfield
Dengie . .	Rev. Geo. Cam. Berkeley	Rochford .	Rev. Edward Cockey
Dunmow .	Rev. H. Lewis Majendie	Roding . .	Rev. William Shepherd
		Romford .	Rev. Wm. S. H. Meadows

There are in the archdeaconry about 255 clergymen, and 193 parish churches, with 19 district churches and chapels of ease, making a total of 212. There are three churches in Harlow, and two in each of the following parishes—South Bemfleet, Great Burstead, Chelmsford, Chigwell, Epping, Hatfield Broad Oak, Lambourne, Latchingdon, Prittlewell, Romford, Springfield, Thoydon Garnon, Waltham Abbey, Great Waltham, Great Warley, South Weald, and Writtle. There are no churches in the parishes of West Horndon, St. Peter's, Maldon, and Snoreham. The Venerable Charles Parr Burney is Archdeacon of Colchester, and has jurisdiction over the following:—

Deaneries.	Rural Deans.	Deaneries.	Rural Deans.
Ardleigh .	Rev. H. R. Somers Smith	Harwich .	Rev. John H. Marsden
Belchamp .	Rev. Oliver Raymond	Mersea . .	Rev. Godfrey Bird
Bocking .	Rev. Mordaunt Barnard	Newport .	Rev. John Collin
Coggeshall.	Rev. Thomas Henderson	Sampford .	Rev. John Fred. Bullock
Colchester .	Rev. James Thos. Round	Stansted .	Rev. Wm. John Copeland
Colne . .	Rev. Robert Watkinson	St. Osyth .	Rev. Richard Duffield
Dedham .	Rev. Dr. Taylor	Walden . .	Rev. Ralph Clutton
Goldhanger	Rev. B. Denne Hawkins	Witham .	Rev. John Bramston
Halsted . .	Rev. Wm. Key Borton	Yeldham .	Rev. John Gascolee

The number of clergymen in the archdeaconry is 238; the

number of parish churches 199 ; district churches, and chapels of ease 7 ; total 206. In Halsted there are three churches, and two in each of the following parishes—Brightlingsea, Finchingfield, Stanway, Tolleshunt D'Arcey, and Witham. There is no church in either Little Henny or Little Holland. Including East and West Ham, and the other parishes not in these archdeaconries, there are in the county—

Episcopal Clergymen	...	...	523
Churches and Chapels of Ease	...	...	439
Parishes without Churches	...	...	5

The duties of the archdeacons are to hold visitations annually, or at the least triennially, to receive the presentations of the churchwardens as to the state of the churches, especially of the chancels, all matters relating to the decent performance of divine service, and public scandals. They have power to hold courts and hear causes relating to the discipline of the clergy ; but an appeal to the bishop lies against their decisions.

At one period the office of rural dean was in abeyance, but of late years, with the revived spirit of the church, has been restored as a part of the system of ecclesiastical discipline and government. The duty the rural deans at present exercise is to act as a medium of communication between the parochial clergy and the archdeacon or bishop ; and associated as they are with their rev. brethren around them, and practically acquainted with their views and wants, the arrangement is found productive of a friendly understanding and ready co-operation on matters affecting the interests of the church. The Essex clergy are represented in the lower house of convocation by four members, two from each archdeaconry, elected by their own body on every summoning of a new parliament.

Within the last 25 years, the means of religious worship in the county have largely increased. District churches, as it is seen by the foregoing statistics, have been built in many of the thickly peopled towns, and amongst the scattered populations of the large rural parishes: the old parochial edifices have been repaired and enlarged. With respect to other denominations, there are in the county one nunnery, that of New Hall, and the following Roman Catholic chapels :—

Barking . . . St. Ethelburga	Romford . . . St. Edward the Con-
Brentwood . . . St. Hellen	fessor
Chelmsford . . . The Immaculate	Stratford. . . St. Patrick and Vin-
	cent de Paul
Colchester . . . St. James	Thorndon Hall . Blessed Virgin and
Dunmow. . . The Immaculate	St. Lawrence
	Heart of Mary
Ingatestone Hall St. Enconwald and	Walthamstow . St. George
	Witham . . . Church of the Holy
	Family
New Hall . . . Chapel of the Holy	
	Sepulchre

The three great Dissenting denominations have at the present time chapels in the following places :—

Parishes	Independent	Wesleyan	Baptists	Parishes	Independent	Wesleyan	Baptists
Abberton ... ..	1	1	1	Grays Thurrock ... ..	1	1	1
Abbots Roothing ... ..	1	1	1	Hadleigh ... ..	1	1	1
Abridge ... ..	1	1	1	Hanningfield, East ... ..	1	1	1
Ardleigh ... ..	1	1	1	Halsted... ..	2	1	1
Ashdon ... ..	1	1	1	Harlow ... ..	1	1	1
Baddow, Little... ..	1	1	1	Harwich ... ..	1	1	1
Battles Bridge ... ..	1	1	1	Hatfield Peverel ... ..	1	1	1
Bardfield, Great ... ..	1	1	1	Hatfield Heath ... ..	1	1	1
Barking ... ..	1	1	1	Haverhill (in Essex) ... ..	1	1	1
Beaumont ... ..	1	1	1	Heddingham, Castle ... ..	1	1	1
Bentley, Great ... ..	1	1	1	Henham ... ..	1	1	1
Bentley, Little ... ..	1	1	1	Heybridge ... ..	1	1	1
Berden ... ..	1	1	1	Ilford ... ..	1	1	1
Bergholt, West... ..	1	1	1	Ingatestone ... ..	1	1	1
Billericay ... ..	1	1	1	Kelvedon ... ..	1	1	1
Blackmore ... ..	1	1	1	Kirby-le-Soken ... ..	1	1	1
Bocking ... ..	1	1	1	Latchingdon ... ..	1	1	1
Boxted ... ..	1	1	1	Langham ... ..	1	1	1
Bradfield ... ..	1	1	1	Langley ... ..	1	1	1
Braintree ... ..	1	1	2	Layer Breton... ..	1	1	1
Broxted ... ..	1	1	1	Leigh ... ..	1	1	1
Brentwood ... ..	2	1	1	Leyton ... ..	1	1	1
Brightlingsea ... ..	1	1	1	Leytonstone ... ..	1	1	1
Bromley, Great... ..	1	1	1	Loughton ... ..	1	1	1
Burnham ... ..	1	1	1	Maldon ... ..	1	1	1
Canewdon... ..	1	1	1	Manewdon ... ..	1	1	1
Chadwell Heath ... ..	1	1	1	Manningtree ... ..	1	1	1
Chelmsford ... ..	3	1	1	Maplestead, Little... ..	1	1	1
Chesterfield, Great ... ..	1	1	1	Marks Gate ... ..	1	1	1
Chigwell Row ... ..	1	1	1	Mersea ... ..	1	1	1
Chishall ... ..	1	1	1	Mount Bures ... ..	1	1	1
Clacton, Great ... ..	1	1	1	Newport ... ..	1	1	1
Clacton, Little ... ..	1	1	1	North Weald Bassett ... ..	1	1	1
Clavering ... ..	1	1	1	Oakley, Great ... ..	1	1	1
Coggeshall... ..	1	1	2	Ockendon, South ... ..	1	1	1
Colchester ... ..	3	1	3	Ongar ... ..	1	1	1
Colne, Earls ... ..	1	1	1	Orsett ... ..	1	1	1
Dagenham... ..	1	1	1	Plaistow ... ..	1	1	1
Dedham ... ..	1	1	1	Potter Street... ..	1	1	1
Dunmow ... ..	1	1	1	Prittlewell ... ..	1	1	1
Easter, High ... ..	1	1	1	Purleigh ... ..	1	1	1
Elmstead ... ..	1	1	1	Rainham ... ..	1	1	1
Epping ... ..	1	1	1	Ramsey ... ..	1	1	1
Felstead ... ..	1	1	1	Rayleigh ... ..	1	1	1
Finchingfield ... ..	1	1	1	Rickling ... ..	1	1	1
Fordham ... ..	1	1	1	Ridgewell ... ..	1	1	1
Forest Gate ... ..	1	1	1	Rochford ... ..	1	1	2
Goldhanger ... ..	1	1	1	Romford ... ..	2	1	1

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The Society of Friends, which numbers about 800 in the county, including non-members who worship with them, have meeting houses in the following places:—

Bocking	Earls Colne	Laver Breton	Stansted Mountfitchet	Witham
Chelmsford	Epping	Kelvedon	Stebbing	Walden
Coggeshall	Dunmow	Maldon	Thaxted (occasionally)	
Colchester	Halsted	Plaistow		

Thus, with two Irvingite and half-a-dozen Primitive Methodist Chapels, there are 681 places of public worship for a population of 369,318 by the last census—or 542 to each; but a vast number of the churches and chapels will not seat half this number; and some of the dissenting chapels are merely licensed rooms; so that there is much for missionary mortar yet to accomplish, and breadths of spiritual waste lands in the county yet to be reclaimed.

END OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE.

# HISTORY OF THE HUNDREDS.

## Chelmsford Hundred.

Chelmsford Hundred lies as nearly as possible in the centre of the county—if we lop off Tendring, which juts out to Harwich and Walton; being situate about 27 miles from Bow-bridge on the one side, the same distance from Balingdon-bridge, the Suffolk boundary, on the other; 24 miles from Hertfordshire on the north-west, and 22 miles from the river Thames, on the south. It comprises the following thirty parishes :—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.					
					Rectorial.			Vicarial.		
Great Baddow...	<i>Bad</i> and <i>ca</i> (water) bad passage	3324		3368	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Little Baddow...	through the water .....	2758	632	3398	567	0	0	460	0	0
Blackmore .....	Colour of soil on the moor .....	2576	704	3767	363	17	0	197	5	6
Boreham .....	<i>Bore</i> (a market) and <i>ham</i> (a village)—the market village	3739	1040	8139	561	0	0			
Broomfield .....	From fields of broom .....	2315	851	5064	680	0	0	440	0	0
Buttbury .....	St. Botolph's Bury .....	2116	506	2963	517	5	0	194	10	0
Chelmsford .....	A ford through the Chelmer .....	2841	7796	25100						
Chignal St. Jas. }	Chicken-hall, and the patron }	908	263	1323	505†	0	0			
Chignal St. Mary }	saints.....	476	69	502	361	8	10			
Danbury .....	A castle or town of the Danes ...	2950	1221	3909						
Fryerning .....	Firars-ing—Friar's pasture .....	1370	743	3249	575	0	0			
Hanningfield, E. }	The Saxon words <i>Han</i> and }	2446	453	2829	385	0	0			
Hanningfield, S. }	<i>Ing</i> , and field—rich pasture }	1526	215	1801	557	0	0			
Hanningfield, W. }	fields .....	2813	555	3909	367	0	0			
Ingatstone.....	<i>Ing</i> (a meadow), and <i>at stone</i> —from a Roman milleary stone	2678	860	5336	778	0	0			
Great Leighs ... }	Pasture or untilled ground ... }	3125	874	4123	450	0	0			
Little Leighs ... }		1080	164	1796	891	0	0			
Margaretting ... }	Margarets-ing — Margaret's (the patron saint) pasture	2259	517	5314	385	5	0	191	5	0
Mountnessing... }	Mountney, the owner, and <i>ing</i> (meadow) Mountney's meadow .....	4065	845	6994				214	0	0
Rattondon .....	Its bad roads — <i>ret</i> (bad) <i>rads</i> (riding) and <i>don</i> (a hill) .....	3932	817	5128	431	5	0			
Roxwell .....	The soil and its wells.....	4755	915	5802	854	0	0			
Ranwell .....	A large running well .....	2059	334	2137	1096	12	0			
Sandon .....	<i>Sand-dun</i> —a sandy hill .....	2278	536	2554	556	0	0			
Springfield .....	<i>Campus aquaticus</i> —a field of springs .....	2378	2582	11523	700	0	0			
Stock .....	<i>Stoek</i> (a log)—the remains of a forest.....	1849	702	2376	750	0	0			
Great Waltham }	<i>Wealt-ham</i> —villages in a wood }	7335	2335	9755	435	0	0			
Little Waltham }		2227	651	3654	1754	17	2	400	0	0
Widford .....	The river Wid and its ford .....	692	184	2488	672	12	6			
Woodham Ferris }	Its woods, and Ferrars, the owner }	4481	981	5152	257	0	0			
Writtle ....	Origin unknown	8672	2423	12319	969	0	0			

\* A donative curacy annexed to Ingatstone.

† Part of this is made up of small moduses in lieu of tithe; 654 acres are tithe-free.

‡ In this parish and Roxwell both great and small tithes belong to New College; they are not distinguished; £43 and £23. 12s. are payable to other parties out of Roxwell tithes.



The lands are for the most part fair and fertile, lying in general low, and being well watered by the Chelmer, the Can, the Wid, and their tributary rivulets; but it is not, as has been sneeringly said, a district in which the inhabitants can see nothing but hedge-rows, their own chimneys, and an occasional village spire. There are gentle valleys and graceful slopes to be found in it; and here and there the land swells up into picturesque eminences, as at Danbury Hill, at Galleywood Common, at Little Baddow, and the Church of Fryerning, from which views can be obtained stretching even into other counties, with large tracts of arable farms nearer home, relieved by dark patches of woodland and the fringing parks which mark the homes of the county gentry. In early times, like other districts, this formed a little local government of its own. The Hundred court was held for the trial of offences, and the inhabitants were organized for the maintenance of order, and held responsible for the escape of criminals—a liability of which a remnant survives in the action which still lies against them for damage committed by a mob. It does not, however, appear to have been a very favourite spot with the old military barons. At least, they have left here none of those castle ruins which are the foot-prints of the race. But the cowed monks fastened thickly upon it; and their religious halls and cloistered homes, it will be seen, were erected in many a fair spot and sheltered nook of the Hundred.

#### CHELMSFORD AND MOULSHAM.

The town of Chelmsford in particular, which in Domesday Book is written Celmerfort and Celmeresforda, was nursed into importance under the fostering wing of the Church. There is some evidence that this was a spot early reclaimed from the wide forest waste; and probably its situation upon the confluence of the Can and the Chelmer marked it out as a pleasant site for a Roman encampment, or the dwelling place of a little colony of later Saxon settlers. If not the veritable Roman *Cæsaromagus*, it was assuredly a place of residence of some of that people. This is proved by the long buried bricks, once forming part of a public building or retired villa, which the spade brought to light a few years ago in a meadow on the south side of the town; and further, by a number of funeral urns dug up in what was once a Roman cemetery, in laying out the grounds which now form part of the Messrs. Saltmarsh's nursery. The place does not, however, appear to have been of much consequence till the beginning of the twelfth century. It came very early into the possession of the Bishops of London. It is

found vested in them as part of the domains of the see in the reign of Edward the Confessor (1041); and the measures which the prelates took to improve the property brought it into repute, and raised it in time to the capital of the county. Prior to the period referred to, Chelmsford was a little isolated village, unseen by the passing traveller, as the high-road lay through Writtle, then a place of consequence, and the site of a royal palace; but in the year 1100, during the reign of Henry I., Maurice the Bishop built the bridge over the Can; and having thus drained the stream of traffic from the neighbouring parish, Chelmsford rapidly rose into importance. The houses increased, the inhabitants multiplied; hostelries were opened for the entertainment of wayfarers, from whom in time great emoluments were received; the old Black Boy, demolished in 1857—fairly run off the road by the railway, which was opened in 1843—being the last representative of these ancient inns; but it does not appear to have been a market town, or to have had the right of holding a fair, till the first of king John. The bishop then obtained these privileges. The prelate, too, as lord of the manor, had a view of frank-pledge therein, and a right to gallows, pillory, tumbrel,\* free-warren, and the assize of bread—rights then considered essential to the government of his domain; and it is probable he was an occasional resident at Bishop's Hall, which was at one time an extensive mansion, fitting for the residence of an olden baron. Indeed, the large privileges of the bishops were looked upon with jealousy by some of the sovereigns, and Edward I. sought to wrest them from Bishop Richard de Gravesend, by means of a *Quo-warranto*. Afterwards, however, he confirmed the rights; and Richard II., in 1395, extended them, by granting to Robert Braybrooke, then possessor of the see, the return of all writs. It is certain, too, that at one period the town sent members to Parliament. The names of four are preserved, who in the 11th of Edward III. went as its representatives to the grand council of the nation, held at Westminster—Wm. de Mascall, John de Thorpe, John de Marescal, and Wm. Wendover; and there is some evidence that it continued thus to be occasionally distinguished down to the time of Henry VI. It is presumed the inhabitants found this a burdensome honor, and petitioned to be relieved from it. At that time votes were not a marketable commodity. There was no pressure of hard sovereigns felt in the

\* The tumbrel was a machine used for the punishment of scolding women, and offending bakers and brewers: it was a stool fixed to the end of a long beam, so mounted that it could be swung over a pond, and the person who occupied the seat of dishonour, plunged into the water. It was sometimes called "the ducking-stool," and was regularly provided in many manors.

palm of the canvasser as he gave the friendly shake ; no silk dress dropped mysteriously through the half-opened door, to give colour to the opinions of the lady of the household ; no snug places in the post-office and the excise to be secured by parliamentary influence. On the contrary, the electors were compelled to dip their hands into their own pockets, and provide for their members a regular salary. The inhabitants must have been at that time few in number, as we find, more than four centuries after, and only 120 years ago, the population amounted to no more than 2,151 ; so that this tax fell heavily upon them ; and no doubt they rejoiced heartily after the fashion of that day, when they succeeded in getting the town disfranchised. Chelmsford, it is asserted by some historians, was at one period incorporated as a borough town. Gray, in his notes to an edition of *Hudibras*, asserts that its civic honours rested upon the lapstone, and the sleeve-board was wielded as its mace ; it was, he says, " anciently governed by a tinker, a tailor, and a cobbler ;" but this we take to be a remnant of some old local lampoon rather than of sober record. Not a fragment of a charter nor a shred of custom or tradition has preserved the memory of civic power and pomp amongst the townsmen. The town, or more properly the manor of Bishop's Hall, continued an appurtenance of the see of London till the time of Henry VIII., when Bishop Bonner made it over to the crown, in which it continued till 1563. Elizabeth bestowed it upon Thomas Mildmay, Esq., to whom Henry, on the dissolution of the religious houses, had sold Moulsham, and lands in Great Baddow, Widford, Stock, and Writtle, which had been the property of the abbot and convent of St. Peter's, Westminster, for £622. 5s. 8½d. In this family the estate, with other property around Chelmsford, still remains. In 1591, a survey was made of the manor, and in this ancient document we find the following description of it :—

" Chelmersforde is one ancient goodly manor, scituate in the heart of the county of Essex, in good and wholesom air, conveniently and well housed, and well built for timber and tile. The chief manor-house was, in the time of King Edward the Thirde, brent and wasted with fire, and before that it seemed to have been some ancient barony. This manor hath very fair dememe, lands, woods, and wastes, and also a great service, more than two hundred tenants that hold of the same manor their lands, tenements, and hereditaments, by reasonable rents, customs, and services, of which number above thirty are noblemen, knights, esquires, and gentlemen of good countenance. Within this manor, upon parcel of the same, upon the common road way, is situate the town of Chelmesford, sometime written the burrowe of Chelmesforde, well situated, with more than three hundred habitations, divers of them seemly for gentlemen, many fair inns, and the residue of the same habitations for victuallers and artificers of city-like buildings ; and are all holden of the said manor of Chelmesforde, mediately or immediately, by reasonable rents,

customs, and services. This town is called the Shire town, not only by the statute of eleven of King Henry the Seventh, for the custody of weights and measures, but so reputed and taken long time before by the keeping of all assizes and sessions of the peace, and many other certifications of the inquisitions there. It is also a great thorough-fare, and market town weekly upon the Fridaye. In the upper face of which town-shipe is situate the parish church of the same town, a goodly, seemly and large building of stone, covered with lead, meet for the receipt of two thousand people, or more. And in the steeple is a convenient ring of four balls. Not far distant from which parish church is one other fair building, called the Market cross, or session house.—And there was then the common goal.”

A spirit of enterprise seems to have stirred the inhabitants of Chelmsford for the last century, and most of the old buildings have disappeared in the progress of improvement. Guy Harling's, in New-street, is perhaps the most ancient which remains. The modern front conceals a building of venerable antiquity, erected by a Norman knight, Guy de Harling, soon after the Conquest. It was afterwards the seat of the Wisemans, a family once of great importance in the county. Baron Comyns resided there while Hylands was erecting, and almost rebuilt the house. But after all the changes that have been made in it there are still a number of antique carvings to be found in the hall, which testify to its old Norman origin. Meetings for promoting the scheme of the Chelmer Navigation were held in 1765; the bill passed in the following year; and on the 9th of June there was a public festival to celebrate the event, bonfires being kindled in the street, barrels of beer distributed amongst the crowd, and at night the town was illuminated. On the 8rd of June, 1797, the first barge came into the basin. The total estimated cost of the works was under £20,000; but the execution exceeded £50,000, and no dividend was paid for 20 years. The new stone bridge over the Can, on the site of the ancient structure, was commenced by the county in 1785, the first stone being laid on the 4th of October, and the way was re-opened on January 14, 1788; the traffic in the meantime having passed by Baddow-lane, crossing the river by a wooden structure, and entering Springfield-lane at the rear of the King's Head. The first Act for paving, lighting, and watching the town was passed in 1789, a gentleman of the county giving £180 towards the object; and this effected a salutary change in the town. But notwithstanding these and other works, Chelmsford was for a long period cramped and confined, and all extensive improvements were checked, it being hemmed in on all sides by the entailed estates of the Mildmay family. No buildings could be raised except on leasehold or copyhold ground. In 1839, however, the entail was out off,

400 acres of land, which were brought into the market in lots, realizing £80,000; and the town soon began to expand on all sides. Through the enterprize of a body of gentlemen a new iron bridge was thrown across the Can, connecting the New London Road, then fresh cut through meadow and arable land, with the centre of the town. Other new streets were formed in various directions. The houses, too, in the chief streets have been greatly improved. A fine Corn Exchange, in lieu of the old one at the shire-hall, was erected in the square, by a company with a capital of £10,000, from a design by Mr. Chancellor, in 1856. Recently the Board of Health has expended £14,000 upon a system of drainage and water supply;\* and the place now contrasts most favourably in general appearance, extent, and cleanliness with the Chelmsford of 50 years ago.

In the earlier years of the present century, and during the greater part of the French war, the town was in the continual bustle of military life. Many of the inhabitants enrolled themselves in an infantry corps of volunteers, under the command of Major Gepp; and a set of colours was presented to them with all the pomp and parade of a public ceremonial, by the Misses Morgan, from a platform in front of Mr. Coates's house (now occupied by Mr. Brand) on the 29th of June, 1798. This corps, when united with the Baddow volunteers under Captain Hull, and the Writtle under Captain Barlow, formed a very efficient regiment. Others joined a cavalry troop under Captain Tufnell, which continued embodied down to 1828; and the last remnant of its uniform was seen on the person of Mr. Wade, at the raising of the Russian gun in 1858. The place, too, swarmed with troops of the line. The barracks at both ends of the town were full, and temporary buildings were raised for 3,000 others. In August, 1803, the fortifications and ramparts from Widford to Galleywood Common were commenced, about 1,000 of the guards and the Lancaster militia being employed upon them; the Star Battery, where the windmill stands, being mounted with 48-pounders, to protect the road to London. With the camps at Galleywood and Mole-hill Commons, the number of troops in the neighbourhood amounted to eight or ten thousand. A sad catastrophe in connexion with

\* The boring for the well passed through black soil, 3 feet; yellow clay, 2 feet 6 inches; gravel, 12 feet 6 inches; quicksand, 44 feet; sand with stones, 4 feet; London clay, 104 feet; ditto and sand, 50 feet; dark sand, 12 feet 6 inches; clay slate, 9 inches; clay and shells, 4 feet; clay slate, 8 inches; dark sand and clay, 9 feet 6 inches; sand and shells, 4 feet; pebbles, 1 foot 6 inches; sand, 7 feet; red clay, 12 feet; clay and sand, 64 feet; dark sand, 80 feet; chalk, 88 feet; rubble, 1 foot; chalk, 113 feet 6 inches.—Total depth, 568 feet. The yield of water is 95,000 gallons per day.

this crowded state of the town occurred in 1804. On the 22nd of October, a body of Hanoverian troops arrived, and as accommodation could not be found for all, 70 of them, with several women, fatigued with their long march, lay down to sleep in a stable at the Spotted Dog. The pipes of the inveterate German smokers speedily ignited the straw. On the first occasion the fire was extinguished; but about eight o'clock the whole building was found to be in flames. The door was only latched, but, ignorant of the mode of opening it, they had no means of escape till succour came from without. Then a crowd of burning men rushed wildly about the yard and street. It was thought all had escaped; but one died of his injuries, and twelve charred corpses were taken from the ruins. The whole garrison turned out at the funeral on the following Friday, and lined the streets with their arms reversed as the thirteen coffins passed up to one grave in the church-yard, over which a huge mound was raised, and long marked the resting place of the friendly foreigners who thus perished.

THE CHURCH, which is in the perpendicular style, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is a fine and spacious building, and originally was of very ancient date—so ancient that the date of its erection and the name of its founder are hidden in the mists of the past. There is little doubt that a church existed in Chelmsford in the Saxon time, perhaps in connexion with the monastery, and long before the Bishop of London obtained possession of it; but the oldest remnant about the present structure appears to be Norman—a rather flattened arch, supported in the centre by mouldings, on the north side of the chancel, which Suckling pronounced to be coeval with the first building. The character of the church was somewhat changed in 1424, when it was partly rebuilt, repaired, and restored; and up to the close of the last century the following record of this event, in letters a foot long, formed of flint, appeared beneath the battlements fronting the town, though even at that time imperfect and almost illegible:—

“PRAY FOR THE GOOD ESTATE OF ALL THE TOWNSHIPP OF CHELMYSFORD THAT HATH BEEN LIBERAL WILLERS AND PROCORERS OF HELPERS TO THYS WERKE; AND FOR . . . THEM THAT FIRST BEGAN, AND LONGEST SHELL CONTENOWE . . . IT . . . IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORDE I THOUSAN III HUNDREDTH XX III.”

In the days when the Roman Catholic was the universal religion of the land, this church had four endowed guilds or chantries belonging to it—St. John's, Corpus Christi, Our Lady's, and Mountney's Chantry, together with 18 obits—sums left for masses for the dead; but the whole of these were



swept away in the general confiscation of the reformation. All traces of the lands which belonged to them have been lost, and the only remnant of them is the apartment now used as a vestry, which is believed to have been the chapel of Mountney's Chantry, and a door in the north aisle leads to an apartment which contains a library rich in old works of divinity, left by Dr. Knightsbridge for the use of the neighbouring clergy, but from its position little visited in the present day. Formerly, too, there stood a chapel dedicated to St. Margaret, on the north of the church, leading to Bishop's Hall, but there is no record of it for the last five centuries. The sacred edifice, as before recorded, suffered from the wild frenzy of puritan zeal, in 1642. Chelmsford was at that time the rendezvous for all the men enlisted in these counties for the parliamentary army; a great number of the people were either Brownists or Anabaptists; and not only did they destroy the splendid painted window, through which the sun threw its "dim religious light" upon the worshippers, but the town was the scene of other acts of riotous violence. The Book of Common Prayer was taken from the church and torn to pieces, and its tattered leaves were scattered about in triumph. When the parliament abolished episcopacy, bonfires were kindled in all the streets, and Dr. Michaelson, the rector, who had been fired at through a window, was obliged to fly for his life. The escutcheons and banners of the ancient donors to the sacred building were also about this time torn down and destroyed. But the building suffered still more fearfully—not from fanatic zeal, but from accident—at the commencement of the present century. About ten o'clock at night, on the 12th of January, 1800, the greater part of the walls, with the whole of the roof, fell with a crash which roused the inhabitants from their supper tables or their slumbers; and, rushing to the churchyard, they beheld the fine old stone tower standing erect and firm, but the great body of the church was gone, and pulpit and pew, altar and tomb, lay buried beneath a mass of shapeless ruins. The immediate cause of the accident was attributed to the loosening and undermining a part of the wall in the course of preparing a vault for Mrs. Pocock, the mother of Mrs. R. Tindal, between the pillars, near the porch; but centuries of time must have sapped the sacred pile, or the whole would not have been thus brought down by a few plunges of the spade. The inhabitants immediately set about re-building the edifice, having obtained an act of parliament imposing a special rate for the purpose. The work was three years in hand, under the superintendence of Mr. Johnson, the architect; and in the



meantime divine service was performed in the shire-hall. The church was re-opened on the 18th of September, 1803. The parishioners have ever since been proud of the sacred edifice as a monument of liberality and taste. It is, indeed, a noble building, 120 feet long, by 54 feet in breadth, including nave and aisles; the south chapel is separated from the chancel by three Tudor arches, the north by a pointed and circular arch. The east end has just been enriched by a gothic window, which the pious affection of the family has erected as a memorial to the late Lady Mildmay. The design is by Mr. Chancellor, and the paintings, illustrative of various passages in the life of the Redeemer, have been executed by Messrs. Clayton and Bell. As a work of art it is worthy to occupy the place of the masterpiece which fell before the Puritans; and it removes from the sacred edifice a window which was felt to be inharmonious in style and miserable in execution. At the west end is a noble organ, erected in 1772. The west door of the tower, with the tower itself, the beautiful south porch, and the shafts of the nave and chancel, are objects, too, upon which the visitor may pause to look with interest, as having formed part of the olden building. The work of the architect of 1800, however, has not escaped criticism. A writer of authority in these matters describes the church as "a compound of modern restorations, grafted upon the fragments of a better taste;" lamenting that the parishioners did not meet with "an architect competent to restore its original features." He adds, however, "the genius of gothic architecture was at that period but just emerging from the ignorance and neglect which had so long enveloped her; and it is perhaps well that these restorations are no worse."

In the crash of the fall, and the process of rebuilding, many fragments of antiquity disappeared. On the north and south sides of the belfry, separated from the body of the church, stood, in 1770, the twelve apostles, painted on wood, very ancient and some of them defaced—not, says an antiquarian of that day, "despicable in point of figure or drapery;" but these have altogether disappeared. Neither do we find any monuments of very ancient date. There is, however, in the north aisle, near the vault of the Mildmay family, a magnificent monument, erected by Lovell more than a century ago, to the Earl Fitzwalter. It is twenty feet high and nine broad. In the centre, in a niche of grey marble, stands a spacious urn, on each side of which rises a graceful pillar of porphyry, with entablatures of the Corinthian order; on pedestals adjoining are two cherubim, one holding a torch reversed, and the other

in a melancholy attitude. At the top are the arms of the noble family ; and beneath, the following inscriptions :—

"Here lyeth Benjamin Mildmay, Earl Fitzwalter, who having many years served his king and country in several great offices of state, with dignity and integrity, died February 29th, 1756, aged 86. He inherited the baronies of Fitzwalter, Egremont, Botetoft and Burnels, from Sir Henry Mildmay, his great grandfather, son of Sir Thomas Mildmay, who married in 1580 Lady Frances, only daughter and heir of Henry, Earl of Sussex, in whom those baronies in fee were vested. He married, in 1724, Frederica, Countess Dowager of Holderness, by whom he had issue one son, who died an infant. He was created Earl Fitzwalter and Viscount Harwich in 1730, but dying without issue, devised his estates to Wm. Mildmay, esq., his nearest relation in the male line. By whom, in gratitude, this monument is erected.

"Here also lyeth Frederica, Countess Fitzwalter, wife of the said earl, a lady of excellent accomplishments, eminent virtues, and most noble birth, who died August 7, 1751, aged 63. She was daughter of Minehardt, Duke Schombergii, (count of the Roman empire) by the Lady Charlotte, daughter of Charles Lewis, Elector Palatine. By her first husband, Robert, Earl of Holderness, she had issue Robert, who succeeded to his father's honors in 1721, and Lady Caroline, married to Wm. Earl of Ancram."

"Here lie also the above-mentioned Sir Wm. Mildmay, Bart., of Moulsham Hall, and Ann, his widow, daughter of Humphrey Mildmay, Esq., of Shawford, Hants."

Close to this is another monumental tomb, of older date, curiously carved, with the effigies of a man and his eight sons, and a mother and her seven daughters ; and an inscription in Latin, which may be thus read in English :—

"Here are seen graven the effigies of Thomas Mildmay, and Avicia his wife ; but within their remains lie in peace. He was a renowned esquire ; she a daughter and lovely branch of William Gunson, Esqr. They had fifteen pledges of their prosperous love, seven whereof were females, eight were males. Afterwards, in the year of our Lord, 1529, and in the morning on the 16th day of September, Avicia returned to that dust from whence she originally sprung ; and, on the 10th day of the calends of October, in the ninth year following, the unrelenting king of terrors triumphed over Thomas."

The Church of St. John, in Moulsham, which is in the early English style, was built as a chapel of ease in 1841, on land given by Lady Mildmay, at a cost of £2,500. It has since been considerably enlarged, and Moulsham has been formed into a separate ecclesiastical district, which cuts it off from the mother church. Besides these two episcopal temples, the town possesses three Independent chapels, one close to the river in the New London Road, capable of containing 2,000 persons, built in 1840 at a cost of £5,000 ; the "Old Meeting-house," as it is called, which has just been rebuilt, in Baddow-lane—probably one of the oldest in the county, tradition carrying it back for at least three centuries ; and a third amidst the clustering population in the Town Field,—a spot which in the memory of almost the youngest man was an open meadow. The other places of worship are the Roman catholic chapel in the New London Road, erected in 1847, at an outlay

of £2,500; a Baptist chapel near the town in the same road; a Wesleyan chapel in Springfield-lane; a Friends' meeting-house in Duke-street; and an Irvingite chapel; so that Chelmsford presents samples of most of the leading religious differences which divide the people at the present day.

**SCHOOLS.**—The town is well provided with educational institutions, at the head of which stands the grammar school, founded by Edward VI. in 1552, out of the proceeds of the chantries. This advantage was secured for the town through the influence of Sir William Petre, then one of the secretaries of state, Sir Walter Mildmay, a general supervisor of the Court of Augmentations, Sir Henry Tyrell, and Thomas Mildmay, Esq., who were appointed the first governors, the office being made hereditary in the heirs male of these families; and the institution was incorporated for the instruction of youth "in grammar learning, under the care and inspection of a schoolmaster and an usher." The present acting governors are Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir John Tyrell, T. W. Bramston, Esq., M.P., and the Rev. C. A. St. John Mildmay. The school was endowed with Hill's charity, in Great Baddow, now consisting of seven houses, cottages, &c., let at £65. 10s; Stonehouse Chantry, East Tilbury; and Cortwyke Marsh, West Tilbury, let at £105; Plumborough Marsh, Southminster, a farm of 178a. 34p., let at £230; and Barries' and Squite Crofts, at Hatfield Peverel and Ulting, let at £36. 5s.—the whole producing an annual income of £488, charged with the payment of 17s. 10d. to the Court of Augmentations, and £2. 0s. 8d. to the poor of Great Baddow. Besides this, the corporation possesses funded property to the amount of £1,805. 5s. 5d. The ancient seal of the corporation, which was found about a century ago at Colchester, and restored to the governors by Morant, who had bought it, has a rose, curiously engraved, upon it, and round the edge is the following inscription:—

"COR. SIGILL. GUB. POSS. REV. E. BONOR. LIB. SCHO. GRAM. REG. EDRI VIRE, IN CHELMSFORD, IN COM. ESSEX."

Originally the school was held in the refectory room of the old monastery at the Friars, in Moulsham, but in 1633 the masters and scholars were driven from this habitation in that venerable ruin by the sudden fall of the dilapidated roof; and the present school-house in Duke-street was erected by Sir John Tyrell, the then acting governor, who purchased part of the George Inn, and its garden, for a site. It was subsequently improved by Earl Fitzwalter, and other trustees. At the end of the last century, and through nearly the half of the present, it was found that the system of the institution, like others of the kind,

had, from the changing circumstances of society, become too narrow and cramped for the wants of the day. It had, indeed, sent forth a few ripe scholars, amongst them Dr. Holland, a learned and rapid translator of the 17th century, who made it a matter of boast that he had written a whole folio volume with one pen. A shining legal light, too, of our own times—the late Lord Chief Justice Tindal—commenced his education within its walls, and emerged from them to work his way to the chief seat in the Court of Common Pleas and the reverence of his profession, and to win for himself a statue in the square of his native town. But still the school went on languishingly. A feeble attempt at reform in 1830, when fresh rules were established by the governors, produced little effect. The doors were open to forty free scholars, half from Chelmsford and Moulsham, and the other half from the neighbouring parishes within a distance of six miles; but this number—scarcely half of it—was never found upon its benches. In 1855, however, the scene was changed. The establishment was modernized, and the scope of its usefulness extended, by a decree of the Court of Chancery, which has infused fresh vigour into the school, and rendered it of far greater local value, by engrafting upon its “grammar learning” those other branches of knowledge which are essential elements of training for the professional and mercantile life of the present day.

The old CHARITY SCHOOL for 30 boys and 20 girls, with residence for the master and mistress, stands at the corner of the church yard. The first was established in 1713, and the latter in the following year. In 1720 Mrs. Ann Breda gave £100 towards the purchase of the school-house; and subsequent bequests and offerings of the benevolent have endowed it with various sums, including £873. 7s. 4d. left by Mrs. Ann Johnson in 1775; £600, bequeathed in sums of £200 each, by J. A. Wallenger, Henry Gilbert, and John Clarke; and £100 each from Henry Lambirth, Timothy Holmsted, and Thomas Chalk. The pupils are clothed; and from Mrs. Johnson's legacy the trustees under her will are enabled to apprentice out a certain number of the boys annually; and many of them have found it a valuable stepping-stone to life. Besides these there are the Victoria National Schools, at the end of New-street, for 300 children, erected in 1841 on a site given by Lady Mildmay, at a cost of £1,100, raised by subscription; the British Schools, in the Friars, for 850 pupils, built in 1840, at an outlay of £1,200, which was chiefly met by contributions from the dissenters; the schools attached to the Roman Catholic Church, in New London Road, in which 80 boys and girls are educated;

and the infant schools attached to Moulsham church, and in Wood-street; so that much is doing in the way of public education in the parish, and few, even of the poorest, need leave their children sitting within the dark shadow of ignorance. As an appendant to the educational institutions comes the Mechanics' Institute, in the New London Road, established in 1848, with its library, reading-room, and lecture hall, an income of £290 a year, and 700 members.

The SHIRE-HALL was built in the last decade of the last century. The first stone was laid on the 14th of August, 1789, and the first Quarter Session was held in it on the 12th of July, 1791. The total cost, including the purchase of houses, was not to exceed £14,000, and Mr. Johnson, the architect, was presented by the county magistrates with a silver cup for completing the building at a sum below the estimates. The noble ball-room, running the whole length of the building, 85 feet long, and 45 feet broad, was paid for and elegantly fitted up, not from the rates levied, but by a subscription amongst the gentry of the county. The first direct notice we find of this building is in the survey before quoted, where it is described as the market cross or sessions' house. From an inscription on a beam of the old hall it appears to have been erected or re-built in 1569. Originally it seems to have been the property of the lord of the manor; but in 1660 a doubt had arisen as to the ownership; and in May of that year, it being reported to the Quarter Session that it had fallen into decay, and was unfit for the meetings of the justices and judges of assizes, an order was made "that the constable of Chelmsford should forthwith cause the same to be repaired at the public charge of the town," unless he could show, at the next court, that it ought to be otherwise repaired, in which case he was to be reimbursed. In 1709 it was reported to the magistrates that Earl Fitzwalter declared that "the house where the assizes were held was his own market-house or toll-house, and his own inheritance;" but he gave the county leave to re-build, repair, or alter it, reserving his own right of inheritance and privileges. At this period the Fitzwalter, or Mildmay family, had a gallery of their own in the crown court, called "the lords' gallery," which was regularly let out, charge being made for the admission of spectators to witness the trials, which brought them in about £12 a year. They had also a place for receiving the tolls of the market-house. The old hall was long in a wretched state. On one occasion it was reported as in danger of falling down; and the *nisi prius* court was re-built, other parts being propped up and re-

paired. It was a mean and inconvenient building, with the remains of an old market cross shadowing it in front, and a road and a row of houses in the rear. These were purchased and pulled down. Thus space for a ground plan, in extent 96 feet by 80 feet, was obtained, and upon this rose the present building. The front is of stone, of a rusticated basement, and three-quarter columns, of the Ionic order, supporting a pediment, below which are bas-reliefs of Justice, Wisdom, and Mercy. In front of the Hall is the 36-pounder Russian gun presented to the town by the government, and installed in its position in July, 1858.

**THE CONDUIT.**—Nearly opposite, in the centre of the square, stands the statue of Lord Chief Justice Tindal, by Baily, erected by subscription of the inhabitants to their great legal townsman. It occupies the site of the old conduit, the origin of which is of unknown date. There is no doubt, however, that, at a very early age, the pure water flowing from the spring of Burgess' well was appreciated by the inhabitants, and that some building of the kind stood on this spot for the purpose of receiving the stream, and distributing it through the various streets. In 1750 it was an erection of brick, and it then bore the following inscription:—

“ This conduit, in one minute, runs 1 hogshead and  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 4 gallons and  $\frac{1}{2}$ . In one day 2,262 hogsheads and 54 gallons. In one month 63,360 hogsheads. And in one year 825,942 hogsheads and 54 gallons.”

The parishioners, indeed, were proud of this water supply.\* It was a feature in the town noticed by every historian; and the noble families of the Fitzwalters and the Mildmays liberally endeavoured to improve and perpetuate it. Sir Wm. Mildmay, in 1771, bequeathed £200 in trust for the purpose. The former building was surmounted by the royal arms, with those of the Duke of Schomberg and Earl Fitzwalter. The stone conduit was erected in 1814 by means of subscription, added to a legacy of £100 from Mr. Robert Greenwood; and more recently the late Mr. Thomas Chalk gave the rent of a house to secure the proper care and guardianship of the well. But latterly—partly, perhaps, in consequence of the Board of Health having adopted an artesian well for the supply of the town—the advantages of this spring have been frittered away; and the conduit, re-erected in the lower part of the town, still flaunts its boastful inscription:—

“ Bountiful to the bounteous; liberal to the covetous; not diminished by bestowing; thus charity from the Heavenly fountain;”

while throughout the greater part of the summer's day it stands dry and desolate, unable to offer to the passing traveller a drop of water to cool his tongue.



THE GAOL, though an appendant of the county town, stands in the neighbouring parish of Springfield. The first pile of the old prison, which stood close to the river, on the site of the present militia depôt, was driven on the 3rd of September, 1773, and the building first occupied on the 19th of October, 1777. In strange contrast to the discipline of the present day we learn that provision was duly made for a tap-room within the walls; and over the mantel-piece was placed a paper that prisoners were to pay garnish or run the gauntlet. The old house of correction stood in the centre of the High-street, on the site of the houses now occupied by Mr. Humphreys, chemist, and Mr. Bull; but in 1806 a new bridewell was built, at a cost of £7,390. 15s. 11½d. About fifty years after the prison had been erected, however, it was resolved to abandon the inconvenient building and the unhealthy site—Howard, the philanthropist, having reported long before that it was too close, and frequently infected with the gaol distemper. The first brick of the new gaol at Springfield was accordingly laid, by Sir John Tyrell, on the 22nd of October, 1822; and it was completed in 1828. The total cost was £57,289. 17s. 0½d. In 1848 a further sum of £36,000 was expended to adapt it to the separate system. The annual expense for keep of prisoners, salaries of officers, &c., is about £5,500. Through its grim and grated doors ebbs and flows the criminal scum of nearly all the county—Ilford now being the only other gaol in Essex—and more than 300 children of guilt are often to be found within its walls.

CHELMSFORD RACES, with the annual gathering at Galleywood, first received the stamp of Royal patronage in 1770. In that year the following official notice appeared in the *London Gazette*, signed by the master of the horse :—

“His Majesty is graciously pleased to give the sum of 100 guineas, to be run for at Chelmsford, in the county of Essex, on the second day of the usual races, by four-year-old mares, carrying eight stone and a half, the best of three heats, two miles to a heat: and orders, as her Majesty landed in Essex, that this shall be called the Queen’s plate. The said plate will be paid in like manner as all others given by his Majesty, without any deduction, at the office at the mews.”

MOULSHAM, though a part of the parish of Chelmsford, appears to have been almost a township of itself. It had in ancient times its monastery, its chapel, its own market cross, and its prison. From a period before the conquest, down to the reign of Henry VIII., it was in the possession of the abbot and convent of the cathedral church of St. Peter, Westminster. From the crown, as already stated, it passed to the Mildmay



family ; and in the survey before quoted, the following account of it is given :—

“ The manor of Mulsham is one antient entire manor, lying together within itself in severalty, holden of the queen's majesty in chief, and not holden or any way chargeable or contributory to any castle, honor, or other common or special seigniory. And it hath belonging unto it, in soils, demesnes, and wastes, more than thirteen hundred acres of good sorts of country soil, both in clay and sand. And also has the rents, customs, and services of more than two hundred convenient tenances, holding of the same manor by free deed and copy of court-roll. And there is belonging, of common poor vicinage, more than fifteen hundred acres, called Galle-wood common, situate in the parishes of Much Badow, Stock, Ging Margaret, and Chelmesford aforesaid, but divided from the manor of Chelmesford by one main river. The manor-place of Mulsham, commonly called Mulsham hall, at this day is the seat of Sir Thomas Mildmay, Knt. In former times it had no proprietary dwelling upon the same, but used by farmers and under farmers, by reason whereof it was grown into great ruin and decay, until, about the thirty-third or thirty-fourth year of King Henry the Eighth, Thomas Mildmay, Esq., did build the same very beautifully, so as it was then accounted the greatest esquire's building within the said county of Essex. And since that time it is much bettered, augmented, and beautified by the same Sir Thomas Mildmay.

“ This manor is seated in a very good wholesome air, upon the sand and gravel, not moated or compassed with waters, but hath sufficient store of ponds and water-courses. And hath conveyances brought into the house, into each office, of very good wholesome spring water abundantly. And of woods it hath great store.

“ To the said manor-place are many fair gardens and orchards belonging, replenished with great store of good and some rare kinds of fruits and herbs.

“ There belong to it a dove-house, of brick ; a fair game of deer, imparked ; a great warren ; a goodly fishing course both in private ponds and common river ; a very good water mill ; and great store of other like necessary provisions. This manor hath three hamlets within the same, viz., the hamlet and street of Mulsham ; the hamlet and street of Wideforde ; and the hamlet of Gavel-wood, which do contain many good habitations and tenancies, and are all holden of the said manor, either by free deed or copy of court-roll, or at the will of the lord of the said manor.

“ In the hamlet of Mulsham there is one grammar school, with convenient stipend for the master and usher, and is in the gift of Sir Thomas Mildmay, Knt., lord of the said manor ; and there is also within the said hamlet one hospital or poor-house for the maintenance and relief of divers poor leprous and laser people, which are put in and out by the said lord. And within the said hamlet also is one antient cross or building, with a prison for the hamlet. And the cross serveth sometime as a market cross, for sale of pease in the season, and for flesh and other mean victuals.

“ The hamlet having no market proper to themselves, but as they are partakers of the market of Chelmesford for the Friday only, and other times in their own cross.”

**MOULSHAM HALL**, the seat of the ancient family of the Mildmays, the lords of the surrounding manors, assailed, not by the “ loosening tooth of time,” but the destroying pick and the levelling crow-bar, has disappeared. Nought remains of it, save a wreck of its grounds, and a remnant of its garden walls.

It stood on a gentle eminence, about a quarter of a mile from the road, on the east of the hamlet, down what is now called Lady's Lane. The grand front commanded a fine view of Danbury hill, and the range of high grounds in that direction, with the intervening vale of extended pasture land, through which the Chelmer and the Can, having united their streams, flow picturesquely along. The mansion was erected by Signor Leoni, for the Earl Fitzwalter, on the site of the older manor house; and it was altogether a noble pile. The front was surmounted by three statues—Diana, Apollo, and Mercury; beneath which were the family arms in *basso-relievo*, carved in freestone. The pilasters, cornices, entablatures, and other decorations were all of stone. In the centre of the mansion was a quadrangular court; and a paved gallery, running round each floor, gave access to the suite of apartments, which included a splendid ball-room, 50 feet long by 30 feet broad, lighted by five noble windows. It included, too, a fine picture gallery; and indeed most of the rooms were rich in family and other paintings. On reading the description of the lordly dwelling, as it appeared in its splendour, about 1770, with its carved work and gilding, and its sumptuous furniture, its extensive park and delightful gardens, the inhabitants of the hamlet, gazing at the vacant spot where it once stood, can scarcely now restrain a sigh of regret at its demolition.

**THE MILD MAY FAMILY.**—The family of which this mansion was the home is of very ancient and honourable standing. Many of its members have, at different periods of our history, taken a leading part in the affairs of the state, and for more than three hundred years it has been connected by property and residence with this county. The house of Mildmay, in fact, traces back its genealogy to the time of King Stephen, its first founder upon record, Hugh Mildeme or Mildme, flourishing as a person of considerable consequence in 1147. During the two or three succeeding centuries we find his descendants seated in Lancashire and Gloucestershire. In the early part of the 15th century the family became connected with Essex by the marriage of one of its members with the heiress of John Cornish, Esq., of Great Waltham. This lady was grandmother of Sir Thomas Mildmay, who appears to have stood high in the favour of Henry VIII., under whom he held the office of auditor of the Court of Augmentations at the time of the suppression of the religious houses; and, like others about the throne at that period, he was enabled, partly by purchase and partly by grant, to build up a family estate in Essex from a portion of the spoils. His four sons became

the heads of great families. Thomas, the elder, settled at Moulsham Hall; and his son, by marriage with the only daughter of Henry Ratchiffe, Earl of Sussex, brought the claim and title of the barony of Fitzwalter into the family. This branch, however, became extinct in 1756, on the death of the last Earl Fitzwalter. William, the second son, who resided at Springfield Barns, succeeding to the estates, became seated at Moulsham Hall. Sir Walter Mildmay, the fourth son of Sir Thomas, who, as already stated, acquired Bishop's Hall and Moulsham, founded Emanuel College, Cambridge, and was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and one of the Privy Council of Queen Elizabeth. To Sir Humphrey Mildmay, one of his sons, who held the high post of ambassador to France, he gave the estate of Danbury Place; but the next heir, dying without issue, devised it to his wife, who married again to Dr. Cory; they had a daughter, who on her marriage carried the present palace of the Lord Bishop of Rochester from the family of Mildmay to that of Ffytch. Sir Henry Mildmay, Knight, was master of the jewel office in the time of Charles I. In the conflicts of the succeeding reign, and the turmoils of the Commonwealth, the house of Mildmay was divided against itself, one of them, as before recorded, becoming a fierce republican, and bringing down upon his name the dark stain of regicide; while the other dared and endured much in support of the royal cause. Perhaps to the misdeeds and the losses and changes of that day, may partly be attributed the withering of the numerous family-offshoots which once flourished in the Essex soil. Indeed, so largely had this family grown in wealth and honours, that about 1620 there were nine distinct branches settled in this county, the baronet, as the head, being followed by a goodly array of seven knights. These were Sir Thomas Mildmay, of Moulsham Hall, Bart.; Sir Henry Mildmay, of Woodham Walter, Knt.; Sir Humphrey Mildmay, of Danbury, Knt.; Sir Henry Mildmay, of Wansted, Knt.; Sir Thomas Mildmay, of Springfield Barns, Knt.; Sir Henry Mildmay, of Graces, Knt.; Sir Walter Mildmay, of Great Baddow, Knt.; Carew Hervey Mildmay, Esq., of Marks; and Sir Robert Mildmay, of Terling, Knt. All these branches have now disappeared. Some have died away, others have been united by marriage, or lopped off, and removed elsewhere. But the noble trunk, with the Paulet branch engrafted upon it, still remains rooted in the soil of its olden manors of Moulsham and Chelmsford. Carew Hervey Mildmay, the last of that line, left his entire fortune to his grand niece, Jane Mildmay, mother of the late Sir Henry and the present rector of Chelmsford. This lady, in

1786, married Sir Henry Paulet St. John—the grandfather of the present baronet—who in 1790 assumed the surname and the arms of Mildmay.

**THE FRIARS.**—The old monastery of Dominican or Black Friars stood near the river, about the spot where “The Cloisters” have been erected. It was a strong and extensive building of brick, flint, and freestone; and its foundation was of very ancient date—so ancient that it has been attributed to Malcolm, King of Scotland; but this must be a mistake, as the Malcolms were dead long before this order was introduced into England. Thomas Langford, a writer of some celebrity in the time of Edward II., was a friar of this house, and his “Universal Chronicle,” from the creation of the world to his own time, was penned in these cloisters on the banks of the Can. At the suppression the revenues of the house were valued at £9. 6s. 5d. The refectory or kitchen was standing till 1633, and, as before stated, after the friars had been driven out, the grammar school was held in it; but the roof, which was of interest as a work of art, being supported and decorated in the same style as that of the theatre at Oxford, fell in with a crash while the room was empty from the dinner hour; and every vestige of the venerable ruin, the only one that Chelmsford could boast, has long since disappeared. Cut off from Chelmsford by the river, barred out from Moulsham by its ponderous gates, and backed by woodlands, the monastery domain, though so near the town, was a lonely and quiet spot. Modern improvement, however, has cut a public road through its gardens, groves, and cemetery. Slim buildings have been reared, and their gables of “modern gothic” extended on the spot where the old building stood in its sullen grandeur. A dissenting chapel has risen up close to where the convent altar stood. The stream of busy life flows along, and the summer evening promenaders pass where the friars wandered in their sombre habits of black, meditating upon the good things of the refectory, or muttering their stated prayers in their retired walks.

In Long-stomps, near the footway leading to Galleywood Common, stood another small monastic institution—a chapel belonging to the abbey of St. Osyth; but the plough has long since passed over its foundation stone. It was endowed with a great part of the tithes of Moulsham; and at the suppression it was valued at £5 a year. The site and the endowment were granted by Henry VIII. to William Gernon, Esq., but soon came by marriage into the Mildmay family.

**ALMSHOUSES AND CHARITIES.**—Foremost amongst the charities of the parish stand its almshouses, which afford

comfortable retreats for fifteen poor families, or widows and widowers of the town and hamlet. Three of them are in New-street, near the church, given by Joan Gayntord and Andrew Wilkes, in 1631; and connected with them are two cottages, built in 1731, on ground given by Baron Comyns, with money from the sale of a barn given by William Davy to the poor in 1520, the rents of which are distributed in bread. Six others stand in Baddow lane; they were given in 1630 by some one whose name has now passed out of record, and were re-built by the parish in 1783. The remaining six are at the top of Moulsham, three for men and three for women, and were founded by Sir Thomas Mildmay, in 1565; but they had been previously endowed by Thomas Mildmay, Esq., his grandfather, who by his will left twenty marks (£13. 6s. 8d.) out of the tithes of Terling, of which £2 was to go towards an usher for the grammar school, £6 to the almshouses, £2 to buy an ox for the poor of Moulsham on Christmas eve, and £3. 6s. 8d. for white and red herrings for the poor of Moulsham, the first and second week of clean Lent. The appointment of the inmates of the almshouses was vested in the owners of Moulsham Hall, and the manor is charged with six loads of wood for them. The present houses were re-built by William Mildmay, Esq., in 1758.

The other charitable endowments are, Queen Elizabeth's gift, £3. 5s. 4d., out of the revenues of the dissolved chantries held by the crown; the rent of Tunman's mead, of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  acres, bought in 1701 with £210 given by Alice Carent and Sarah Nash; the dividends of £160. 13s. 4d. Three Per cent. consols, purchased with £100 left by Matthew Joyce, in 1778; the whole being distributed in bread—Joyce's charity being for poor widows who have not received assistance from the parish. There was a yearly rent-charge of £1. 6s. 8d., left by Simon Scafield, out of Mill-field, Springfield, but this does not appear to have been paid since 1731.

WIDFORD.—THE SEAT OF HYLANDS.—Taking the high road London-ward, now almost deserted for the rail, save by the local residents or some stray traveller, but along which, twenty years ago, flowed the stream of traffic from Suffolk and Norfolk, and more than sixty stage coaches passed to and fro daily—Widford is reached at about a mile from Moulsham. The church by the road side, in the village, is a small structure of Saxon origin, it is believed, but exhibiting various styles of later architecture. A small chapel on the north side was built by Mr. Sergeant Altham, in 1604; it belongs to the lords of the manor of Widford—the only manor in the parish; and in

the churchyard close by it, is a stately monument to the memory of the Viscountess Falkland, who possessed the estate in the last century. From the brow of the hill a little beyond, a fine view is obtained of Hylands—so called from its lofty situation—a lordly mansion, crowning the opposite eminence, surrounded by its pleasure grounds and gardens, and its wide spreading park extending down the slope to the valley through which runs the river Wid. The manor and estate were in 1329 in the Earl of Kent, son of Edward I., beheaded for the attempt to effect the deliverance of the captive Edward II.; from whom they passed through various hands to Sir John Comyns, Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, who built the house in 1780. The Labouchere family, who for a time dwelt there, enlarged and improved it. It then came into the possession, by purchase, of John Attwood, Esq., and about 1848, so extensive were the alterations made, that it may be said the mansion was almost re-erected. The stately rooms were fitted up with almost reckless luxury. The beautiful pleasure grounds and gardens were extended. The park was enclosed with miles of solid wall. All the cottages around were demolished,—the mansion of Copfold, on a hill about a mile distant, was purchased and pulled down, as if no rival could be permitted within sight of Hylands; public roads were bought and blocked up with plantations, and a grim baronial solitude was created. The object of the great iron-master and merchant was to found a name, and build up, through his nephew, an Essex family—adorned, if possible, with a peerage. But over-wrought speculation prostrated the millionaire in a day. The political influence he had been grasping at in many boroughs, withered. His splendid furniture, paintings, and articles of *virtu*, seized by the creditors, were scattered amongst the highest bidders; and the whole domain lay desolate and deserted, till purchased in 1857 by A. Prior, Esq., of the great London firm of Truman, Hanbury and Co., who has given life again to the mansion, and revived the neglected beauties of the grounds.\*

MARGARETTING.—A mile further on we reach Margaretting, a straggling village, surrounded by light fertile land. The manor-house of Copfold, or Cold Hall—in 1360 the property of the Countess of Oxford, and afterwards of the Clovilles, and which 80 years ago was described as “an exceedingly pleasant

\* The charities of Widford consist of the interest of £200 left by Lady Falkland in 1776, for distribution in bread to the poor; £100 left for a like purpose by the Rev. J. Saunders, in 1814, together invested in £379.4s. 8d. Consols; and £100 Three per Cents, left by B. Serjeant in 1788, for clothing for two poor widows and two widowers.

mansion, with gardens laid out in a pretty taste"—has, as already stated, disappeared. That of Shenfield—from Scenfield, "a pleasant field," but now called Peacocks—near the hall which was once the hiding place of Henry the Eighth's frail beauties, has been improved and modernized by its present owner, George Straight, Esq. Margaretting Hall, standing about half a mile from the road, to the right hand, and its manor, once the property of the De Veres, has been since 1592 in the possession of the Petre family. Close to it, nestling amidst elms and rows of poplars, stands the church, an ancient but rustic structure, with its wooden belfry, and its porch of the same material, in the Tudor style. The interior contains the lower part of the remains of a very ancient screen, and a fine font; and amongst the inscriptions, mostly of the seventeenth century, is the following on Peter Whitecombe and his wife, of Ingatestone, who were married 42 years: the wife died in January, 1666, aged 70, and the husband in November of the same year, aged 77:—

"She on this clayen pillow layd her head,  
As brides do use the first to go to bed,  
He miss'd her soone, and yet ten months he trye  
To live apart, and lykes it not, and dyes."

In 1625, John Tanfield charged Copfold Hall with the distribution of ten dozen penny loaves to the poor, in Lent; the Rev C. F. Bond, in 1827, left £100 Bank Stock, the dividends to support the Sunday School. The parish has 19 tenements standing in the street, occupied by paupers or let to poor families.

INGATESTONE.—THE PETRE FAMILY.—Returning to the high road, a brief mile brings us to Ingatestone, the plantations and park of the Hyde, the seat of Edgar Disney, Esq., skirting the north side up to the town. The mansion, which is quadrangular, of red and black brick, was erected in its modern style by Timothy Brand, Esq., in 1713; but the house had existed nearly a century and a half before. The mansion was rich in the remains of the past,—antique busts, statues, Greek and Roman vases, &c., partly collected by Thomas Brand Hollis, in a tour in Italy, in the middle of the last century, and largely added to by the classical and antiquarian taste of the late John Disney, Esq., who presented the principal portion of the marbles to the University of Cambridge—forming the Disney Museum—when he also endowed a professorship of archæology. Many valuable specimens of the arts and taste of antiquity, however, still remain; and the apartments are adorned with fine paintings by Rubens, Vandyke, Tenier's, and other old masters.



What is popularly known as the town of Ingatestone is two-thirds in the parish of Fryerning. Formerly there was a good cattle-market here, held on Wednesday; and even so late as 1770 we are told the inhabitants derived great benefit from it; "for being not above 23 miles from London, many graziers, jobbers, and butchers come from thence, and carry on a considerable traffic here." Its market square, however, has long been deserted by the dealer, and is now partly enclosed. Its inns, of which at the period alluded to it was stated principally to consist, have dwindled away beneath the pressure of the rail, which runs close to the town; and the once great thoroughfare whose trade drew sustenance from the stream of passing travellers, is now a quiet rural village. The whole of the three manors in the parish, Ingatestone, Hanley, and Wood Barns, belonged to the nunnery at Barking; but at the dissolution, Sir William Petre bought the first of Henry VIII. for £849. 6s. 6d.; and the others, though granted by the same monarch to two of his servants, very soon came into the same family. Sir William Petre, the founder of the noble house, built the hall, which lies about half a mile south of the town, in 1565. It was a stately pile of red brick, with its outward and inner courts; but after the noble family migrated to the more modern house of Thorndon, the work of demolition commenced, and has been carried on, till not more than one-third of the original structure now remains. This, however, is sufficiently ample for the accommodation of four or five families. It includes the residence of Joseph Coverdale, Esq., the steward of the estates, the Roman Catholic chapel, and the house of the priest. The other portions are let off to private individuals. But even in its decadence the hall bears about it venerable traces of its former greatness. A noble gallery remains. Specimens of its olden tapestry are to be found upon its walls. Ancient paintings and carvings meet the eye; and though its spacious park, which once extended up to the town, and stretched down to the boundary of the little river Wid, has long since been enclosed as meadows, or overrun by the plough, the time-wrecks of its venerable oaks, portions of the splendid gardens, the vineyard, the sheltered walks and avenues of limes, still remain, and invest the spot with much of the interest of the past. The parish church, which adjoins the street, is in the perpendicular style of the fifteenth century, with a fine brick tower. In a small chapel, on the north side of the chancel, is the mausoleum of the Petre family, the monuments and inscriptions here and on the southern side furnishing a history of the founders of that noble house. The corner-stone of it appears to have been Sir

William Petre, born at Tor-Brian, in Devonshire, who distinguished himself as a politician and statesman, and through four troubled reigns, when the reformation was in progress, steered his course with such consummate skill that, amid the sudden changes of the time, the suspicions of the contending parties, and the fury of persecution, he not only passed unscathed, but continued to hold the office of Secretary of State. As one of the visitors of the monasteries, he assisted in the suppression of these institutions; but after helping on the reformation in this and other capacities, and founding a princely estate from the spoils of the Romish church, he contrived, with principles apparently so pliable that they bent to every breeze, to win the confidence of Queen Mary. After her death, by another trim of the sails, he caught the favour of Elizabeth. To the memory of this statesman an elegant altar tomb, a beautiful specimen of the art of that day, but mutilated, and for a long time, it appears, little cared for, is seen on the south side of the chancel. It is six feet high, seven long, and four wide. On the top, which is supported by eight pillars, four on each side, are lay figures of this illustrious man and his lady, finely wrought in Parian marble, the head of one resting on a helmet, and the other on a pillow. Between the rows of pillars is an inscription in Latin, which in English reads as follows:—

“Here lie interred Wm. Lord Petre, Knight, with dame Ann, his second wife, daughter of William Browne, who died Lord Mayor of London. The aforesaid nobleman William Lord Petre was by summons from Henry King of England, the eighth of that name, called to the office of Secretary, and to be one of his Majesty's Privy Council, in which station he continued under King Edward the Sixth, by whom he was made Treasurer of the first-fruits and tenths. After the death of Edward, he held the same offices under Queen Mary, which she conferred upon him, together with the Chancellorship likewise of the most noble order of the Garter. He was, too, one of the council of our Lady Queen Elizabeth.”

Royal favours and offices appear to have been also showered upon the brother of Sir William. At the east wall of the south aisle is a marble monument, with a statue in a niche, in a posture of devotion, and on a tablet of black marble is the following inscription:—

“Heare lyeth enterd the body of Robert Peter, yongest brother to Sir William Peter, Knt., of Westminster, in the cown of Mid., Esq., who lyved and dyed a faythful officer to the moste famous Queene, Eliza, in the receyte of her majesty's Exchequer. He departed this lyfe at Weste Thorndon, in Essex, September 20, in the year of our Lorde God, 1593.”

The most superb monument of this family, however, is in the chapel. It is eighteen feet high, and fourteen broad, composed of various kinds of marble, which have a beautiful

effect. It is surmounted by a noble arch, which is supported by four pillars of black marble, and four of porphyry. This was erected to the memory of John Lord Petre, who in 1603 was created Baron of Writtle. Under the arch are the full-length statues of the noble lord and his lady, kneeling, with a book open before them; and beneath them the following inscription in Latin:—

“John Lord Petre, of Writtle, son of that William who was Privy Council to four sovereigns, Henry the Eighth, Edward the Sixth, Mary, and Elizabeth, and was likewise despatched as Ambassador seven times to Foreign Princes, and co-founder of Exeter College, in Oxford.”

Between the pillars which support the arch on the left is the statue of the peer who raised this memorial of filial affection, and beneath him are effigies of his eight sons. Between the pillars on the right is the effigy of his wife, the daughter of Lord Somerset, Earl of Worcester; and beneath her are their five little daughters—the whole presenting a beautiful object of interest and art.

It is almost needless to say that the noble family of Petre, from the death of its founder, and through days of contumely and exclusion, down to the present peer, who is the twelfth in a direct line, has continued consistent Roman Catholic. Just out of the town, towards London, on the left of the road, stands a noble monument of the benevolence of the family, for the humbler classes of their creed—a range of twelve alms-houses, eight for women, and four for men, forming three sides of a square, neatly built of red and white brick, and with a small Roman Catholic chapel in the centre. The alms-houses, ten in number, formerly stood on the right-hand side of the road leading to Stock, and were originally founded by Sir William Petre, in 1557, some years before he built the Hall. He endowed them with £48 a year out of Crondon park; £18 out of Catlyns, in Buttsbury; £6. 13s. 4d. out of Ramsey Tyrrells; and £18. out of an estate at Fryerning—the latter being given instead of six cows, two for the priest and four for the poor, that were to be fed on the manor of Ingatestone. The minister who was to be priest to the hospital was to have £4. a year, £6. in lieu of the cows, 15s. for a gown, and £1. 16s. for wood. The inmates were to have 6s. 8d. a month, 24s. for wood, and 12s. for a gown; ten of the other common poor were to have 2s. 8d. a month; twenty poor 6s. 8d. on Christmas eve, and forty 13s. 4d. each on Easter eve. The old houses were taken by the Eastern Counties Railway in 1840, and the late Lord Petre then built these twelve houses in lieu of them, at a cost of £1,400. The inmates are allowed a larger sum than provided by the deed,

and the dwellings form a happy asylum for those whose limbs have been unnerved for labour, or who, once in better circumstances, find their closing days overclouded by misfortune. In 1775 the Rev. T. Ralph left £2 a year to the poor of this parish, to be paid by the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy; and the dividends of £100 Three per Cents. left by Rosamond Bonham in 1805, are applied to the support of the schools.

**FRYERNING.**—About a mile to the right of the town, on a hill top, which gives it delightful views, and in some directions makes it a conspicuous object for many miles distant, stands the church of Fryerning. It is a structure of considerable antiquity, and is believed to have been erected soon after the conquest, as some of the original windows retain the round Norman arches; but it underwent great alterations in the reign of Henry VII., when the tower was erected, and a more modern air given to the old fabric. On the ground in the chancel is a black marble stone, in which, eighty years ago, were brasses of a man and woman, with the words proceeding from the mouth of the former—"Oh God, in Thee have we trusted;" and from the latter, "Lord, let us not be confounded." Below, on a plate of brass, was an inscription, of which the following only could then be deciphered:—

"Here underlyeth buried the body of Leonard Berners, late o..... Thyrde, sonne and heyre of Wyllm Berners, thelder, esquier, who deceas..... bruary, in the yere of oure Lorde God 1563, whose soule we truste A..... Leonard had to wyfe Mary, Theldest dawter and one of the heire ..... Shenfylde, in the Countye of Essex, esquier, by whome she had yssue William A.....

Beneath this, in brass, were two men in the habits of friars, and a woman; but these have disappeared, and the blank black stone alone remains. The churchyard is thickly studded with venerable yews, whose dark foliage, says Suckling, "casts a sombre shade around highly in unison with the sacred character of the place:" and on a stone beneath their shadow is the following epitaph on Mr. Perry, who planted them—

"Reared by his hand these ambient shades arose,  
Midst which his relics now in peace repose,  
And where this frail memorial stands to prove,  
The parent's merit, and his children's love."

The whole of the parish formerly belonged to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, and it remained in them until the suppression of the monasteries. Afterwards it was purchased by Dorothy Wadham, a daughter of Sir William Petre, who conferred it on Wadham College, Oxford, in completion of the endowment which her husband had begun. Close to the church is the old manor house, the hall now occupied as a farm house; and within the circuit of a mile are the pleasant

seats of many of the gentry—Huskards, occupied by Tindal Atkinson, Esq. ; Maisonette, the seat of Captain Jesse ; Furz Hall and St. Leonard's, the estate of Captain Kortright, and the mansion of Mr. Grant, with their extending parks and pleasure grounds. The charities consist of the interest of £250 left by W. G. Coesvelt in 1841, in trust, for clothing the deserving poor ; and there are distributed in bread, &c., £3 from Bright's, £1. 10s. from D'Oyley's charities ; the interest of £100 Three per Cents. left by Rosamond Bonham in 1805 ; and £3. 10s. from £100 3½ per Cents. left by Dr. Sorrell in the same year.

**BLACKMORE—THE PRIORY.**—Proceeding two or three miles further to the west we reach Blackmore, which is bounded by the Ongars, and forms the verge of the Hundred in that direction. It is now a small and pleasant village, considerably improved of late years ; but in old times it must have been a place of some importance as the site of a monastery and an occasional home of royalty. Henry VIII., as we have seen, was often at Jericho House, which appears to have been substantially a portion of the priory, since, if it was not actually connected with the buildings it stood close to them, and formed the mansion of the manor of Blackmore, the whole of which belonged to the monks. The house is still standing within whose retired shade the stern religious reformer sheltered his vices from the observation of the followers of his court ; but of course it has undergone many changes, improvements, and enlargements, to adapt it to modern requirements. Sir Jacob Ackworth, who purchased it, at the beginning of the last century, of the family of Smyth, to whom it was granted at the dissolution, made many additions to it ; and in the course of the works a small leaden coffin, about a yard in length, and filled with bones, was exhumed. Other memorials of the past have occasionally been turned up on this spot ; but, save the church near, not a stone or other fragment of the Priory now remains. Even the foundations are gone. We recollect some forty years ago observing a stone which appeared to have been taken from the ruins, and upon which an inscription was still half legible, used as a door-step for a house in the neighbourhood. The shrubberies and lawns of Blackmore House have long since extended, and flower-beds have been planted, and kitchen gardens flourish in luxuriance over the very spots where the friars feasted and the monks prayed. The monastery was never of very great importance. It was founded by the family of De Sandford, either in the reign of Henry II. or King John, for canons regular of the order of St. Augustine ; but though it was endowed with several manors, and had lands and other

rights in Margaretting, Willingale, Broomfield, Shellow Bowels, Norton, Writtle, South-weald, Kelvedon, and Stondon, its whole income was valued in 1527 at £85. 9s. 7d. Although the reformation had not then commenced, it was dissolved in that year, and the property granted to Cardinal Wolsey, for part of the college he was endowing at Oxford. On the fall of the Cardinal, two years after, it reverted to the crown, and soon after passed in exchange to the abbey of Waltham, which, by the deed, had a grant of a fair of three days, on the 9th, 10th, and 11th of August; and less than a century ago this was a cattle mart of some importance. On the general crash of monastic property, the manors were granted by the king to the Smyth family, descended from Sir Michael Carrington, standard-bearer to Richard I. in the holy war, who subsequently acquired other property in the neighbourhood, and was long located at Smyth's Hall. The property of the parish is now divided. The manor of Blackmore, and that of Fingrith, once in the Mildmay family, belong to James Parker, Esq. The latter was originally held by the De Sandfords and De Veres of the king, in capite by grand serjeanty, viz., "the tenant having the honour of being chamberlain to the Queen of England, of keeping her chamber, and the door of the same, on the day of her coronation; and of having for his fee the furniture of the chamber, the beds, basins, &c.;" but this has been laid aside, with other ridiculous usages and tenures of former times. Though the claim was made at the coronation of Queen Anne, and again at that of Queen Caroline in 1727, it was disallowed.

The Church, there is no doubt, was a part of the old priory. The cloisters, in fact, appear to have abutted upon the wall of the south aisle; and it was here the monks assembled for matin worship and mass. The western end appears to have been part of the old original fabric, low, and heavy; but upon this has been engrafted an elegant, light, and lofty building; and at the point where the two join, the tasteful pilaster of a later day may be seen dove-tailed into a heavy Norman pillar. The tower is of wood, on the same principle and pattern as that of Margaretting,—probably by the same architect, as both belonged to the monastery; and Suckling supposes that the massive Norman walls and columns were left because the monks contemplated raising a goodly tower of stone, but having emptied their treasury by the other works, their taste yielded to necessity, and they wound up with a spire of timber. The sacred edifice is dedicated to St. Lawrence, whose martyrdom is represented in stained glass over the door; and

on the wainscoted roof of oak are the royal arms, amongst them those of Richard II., and of some ancient and noble families, who are probably thus commemorated for their gifts or endowments to the monastery. At the end of the chancel is the burial place of the Smyths, with its decayed tombs and half-obliterated inscriptions. It is a singular fact, however, that only one solitary remnant of the funeral monuments of the monastic inhabitants remains. An old grey stone, worn by time and the tread of worshippers, and robbed of its elegant-shaped cross of brass, lies in the chancel; some years ago might be traced on this, in the Saxon character—

“To the memory of the just Prior, Thomas De Vere.”

Here, too, lies one of the expelled clergy and victims of the Commonwealth: on a grey marble stone, beneath the arms of the Lynch's, appears the following epitaph—

“Here lyeth the body of Simon Lynch, Rector of Runwell, who for fearing God and the King, was sequestered, prosecuted, and persecuted, to the day of his death by Gog and Magog, and left issue Elizabeth, Sarah, Symon, and Ithuel, unto whom the Ld. be merciful, who died on the 19th of June, 1660, aged 60 years.”

Local benevolence in former days had provided largely for the poor of this parish. A house, garden, and orchard, called Claydons, were left for them by George Callice in 1580; the rent of the Bull public-house and 10 acres of land, by Thomas Almond in 1728; a rent-charge of £3. 5s. secured by John Witham, on lands at Blackmore; 10s., left by H. Waller, in 1601, out of a farm at Ongar; £2 left by J. Simonds in 1606, out of Copyholds Farm; £4 from a house and garden left by William Peacock, and purchased by the parish in 1724, subject to certain charges; these are distributed in bread. Sir S. Powell in 1618 left 40s. a year out of Smyth's Hall, for eight poor women; and a rent-charge of £3 5s., purchased by the parish with various donations, is distributed amongst 18 of the poorest. Bell Rope Piece—half an acre of land—is left to supply bell-ropes. These charities form together a handsome income. Pauperism, however, is as rife in this parish as elsewhere—so true is it that charity often destroys the self-reliant spirit which can alone form a class of independent poor.

**MOUNTNESSING.—THOBY PRIORY.**—Returning in a southerly direction to the high road, at about a mile from Ingatestone, we come to Mountnessing. It is a small scattered village, in the centre of a rather extensive parish, which reaches to Shenfield at one point and up to the town of Billericay on another. Here we come upon the site of another of the old monastic institutions—Thoby Priory, of which time and better taste have left us some interesting ruins. The Priory was



founded in the reign of King Stephen, in 1141, or within ten years after, by the family of De Capra, several members of which united for the purpose ; and it took its name from its first prior, Tobias or Toby. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Leonard, and was inhabited by monks of the Augustine order. Its endowments consisted of the great tithes of the parish, 497 acres of land, and about 27 acres of copyhold. The priory buildings formed a square, on the south side of which stood the church, of which the arch of the south window of the chancel, and the first arch and its columns of the southern arcade of the nave, still remain ; but these are of a much later date than the original monastery. The cloisters were on the north. The refectory stood on the west, and the festal hall of the banished monks has been preserved nearly entire, being incorporated, with other portions of the buildings, into the present mansion, though disfigured by modern sash windows, and the fine roof hidden by barbaric plaster. The whole plan of the priory may still be traced ; and the ground about it has been found rich with its ruins. The chance plunges of the spade have at different times brought to light objects of much antiquarian interest. Part of the figure of a Knight Templar was some years since turned up beneath the garden mould, the armour, the recumbent lion, and the drapery being after the usual pattern of these monuments ; but there is this singular fact about it, that it is composed of plaster moulded on an iron frame. Suckling supposes it was dedicated to the memory of some knight of the family of Monteny or De Capra, connected with the priory in the crusading times. Near the cloisters, too, have been dug up six coffins, formed from the trunks of oak trees, scooped out, and charred, the bark still remaining on some of them ; and Mr. Grant, the then occupant, had boxes and ornaments made out of the wood, which was found capable of a high polish. Two of the coffins, which were opened, were found to contain perfect skeletons of females. Knives of bone, with ivory handles, coins, and ornamental floor tiles, have also been turned up ; and, says a recent writer, " so little has curiosity been gratified here, that the principal antiquarian treasures of this fallen pile remain to be developed at a future day." Wolsey, who, although a cardinal, could make a luncheon of a monastic institution, had grasped the priory in 1525 ; but on his fall it came to the crown. At the suppression it was valued at £75. 6s. 10½d., which it has been calculated put the land at about 2s. an acre, though under the good culture of the monks it had become the richest in the parish. It was granted first to Sir Richard Page ;

then it came to the family of Prescott, and passed by marriage to that of Blencowe, who still own it. It is now occupied by Mr. Vickerman.

Of the five manors in the parish, three belong to Lord Petre. Bacons, the residence of William Havers, Esq., which lies near Ingatestone Hall, received its name from Edmund Bacon and his brother, who possessed it in the reign of Edward I., and by royal license formed an extensive park around it, which, however, agricultural advancement has long since brought into profitable cultivation. Mountneys, too, or Mountnessing Hall, which stands on a slight eminence near the church, a mile and a half from the village, and took its name from an ancient family in the county, located here in the reign of King Stephen, had of old its park, which is also laid out in rich pastures and arable fields. Cowbridge belonged to the Abbey of Stratford Langthorne, and was part of the spoil appropriated to Sir Richard Rich, whose family sold it to Sir William Petre. The owner of Thoby is lord of Arnolds, whose mansion-house is a large and venerable pile. The church, which was appropriated to Thoby Priory, is a neat and convenient building of the time of Edward I., though an antiquarian writer has described its chancel as "a barbarous modern erection of red brick." Amongst the monuments in the sacred building are several to the Blencowe and Prescott families, the former residents of Thoby; and on a plain stone in the chancel appears the following, in old English characters:—

"17 Decembria, 1583.

"Layde heere aloone all dedde in tooeme John Peers of Arnolldes Hall,  
Awaitheth for the daye of dooime till Christe hym up shall call,  
Whose tyme now paste on earth well spent hath gotten hym good name,  
His honest lyfe and govermente deserved well the same.  
God grannte that his good dealyne may to us example be  
Of Mountneysinge that rightlie say an honest man was he."

Leaning against the font is a fossil rib bone, four feet and three quarters long, dug up some years ago in the parish. Village tradition and credulity assert it to be that of a giant, once an inhabitant of the village, and respecting whose doings strange tales used to be current round the winter evening's cottage fire; but probably the anatomist and the geologist would tell us that the relic is that of a whale, or a remnant of the elephant or the mammoth, that in former conditions of the earth trod the soil. There is a school in the parish endowed with a farm of 17a. 3r. 16p., called Punchons, left by John and Amy English, in 1787. The poor have the rent of a field of six acres, purchased with money left by E. Canning in 1681; and five roods of land left by an unknown donor.

STOCK AND BUTTSBURY.—Threading our way eastward,

through bye-roads and green lanes—a delightful rural ride in the summer months, skirted as they are by rich pastures, corn-fields, and woodlands, but almost impassable in winter—we reach the twin villages of Stock and Buttsbury, seated on the road between Chelmsford and Billericay. In old Saxon times, as its name implies, it was a half-cultivated spot, blocked up with forest lumber. Now it is a clean modern village, almost within hearing of the railroad train, but still out of the hum of the great world. The manners, too, of the agriculturists must have been greatly civilized since the days of Cowper, if there was any truth in his satire, for the poet, in his “Tithing Time at Stock,” which was written here, thus describes them at the rector’s table:—

“ One wipes his nose upon his sleeve,  
One spits upon the floor ;  
Yet, not to give offence or grieve,  
Holds up the cloth before.”

Stock appears to have been originally a hamlet of Buttsbury, and most of its lands at the present day are held of the lords of the latter parish. There is not a manor-house within it ; but as we toil up the steep hill, in the direction from Stock Brook, which—somewhat to the peril of the traveller in flood time—still remains a primitive ford, we see seated on the first plateau to the left of the road, and overlooking a fine expanse of country, a mansion in the Grecian-Doric style, erected by W. P. Johnson, Esq., in 1847. Ascending higher, we see the National Schools, of red and white brick, built in 1839, in the Tudor style ; on the right, a little further on, the parish church ; close to it the neat and modern rectory-house ; and beyond, the village street, with its Independent Chapel, built in the plain style of 50 years ago, before dissent began to assume the ornamental in architecture. The church, dedicated to All Saints, in the decorated style of Edward III., has a steeple of timber, on the same principle as those of Margaretting and Blackmore, which bespeaks the ancient character of the original structure. The chancel was re-built, and the whole thoroughly restored, about twelve years ago ; and the new works have been made to harmonize admirably with the old. Prior to this there stood in the south wall an altar tomb to John Twedye, of Boreham, which, however, has been swept away by the ruthless hand of the modern improver. On the grey marble stone which covered it was an escutcheon inlaid in brass ; beneath it, a man in armour, in a posture of devotion, and at his feet this inscription, in old English characters—

“ The corpes of Richard Twedye, Esquire, lyeth buried here in tombe,  
Bewrapte in claye and so reserved until the joyefull dome ;

Whoe in his lyffe hath served well against the Englishe foes  
 In foren landes and eke at home, his cuntrye well it knows.  
 The prince he served in courte, full large a pensioner fit in personage,  
 In his country a justice eke a man full grave and sage.  
 Foure almes-houses here hath he bilte, for foure poor knights to dwell,  
 And them indowed with stypends large enough to keepe them well.  
 In fiftye-eight yeares his course he ran, and ended the 28th Januarye, 1574."

The poor knights so pompously alluded to must have been the most economical of personages if the stipends kept them well, as the endowment, which is paid out of a farm at Stow Maries, amounted to only 12d. a week, and 8s. a year for livery. They now receive £3. 8s. each. The alms-houses still remain, inhabited by two poor men of Stock and two of Boreham. Edward James, too, in 1601, left a house and four acres of land at Downham for the relief of the indigent of Stock and Buttsbury. Most of the lands of the two parishes—the latter of which contains seven manors—belong to Lord Petre. Crondon Park, though situated in the heart of Buttsbury, is a hamlet of Orsett, 16 miles distant, and it pays tribute in the shape of rates and tithes to its foreign head—a curious anomaly in parochial arrangements, which arose, perhaps, from its having once belonged to the see of London, whose bishops, we have seen, resided at times at Orsett Hall. The church of Buttsbury is a small and humble building, standing at the extremity of the parish to the west, within two or three fields of Ingatestone Hall. It is dedicated to St. Mary; and in Roman Catholic times it was appropriated to the nunnery of St. Leonard, at Stratford, which, it also appears by olden records, had a hermitage near this spot. All trace, however, of the cell of the hermit of Buttsbury has been lost for centuries past.

**THE HANNINGFIELDS.**—From the boundary of Stock we enter the clustering parishes of the Hanningfields, East, West, and South. Little more than a century and a half ago most of this tract was forest or wood land; and a writer seventy years since observes, "even at this present time it wears a dreary forest-like appearance." It now forms, however, three pleasant villages, surrounded by fertile and well-cultivated farms. From the time of the Normans, when they were seized by the lord of Dunmow, the manors have passed through the hands of the De Veres, (one of whom had a park in East Hanningfield about 1260), the Clovilles, Beauchamps, Nevilles, and others, till all the paramount rights settled in the Petre family; though there are various subject manors, and Sir J. Tyrell, Sir W. B. Proctor, and others, are part possessors of the soil. Notwithstanding its recent woodland character, the district was early studded with old manor-houses; but there is little of historical interest per-

taining to them, save as connected with the defunct and half-forgotten families who once dwelt within or owned them. The churches, too, bear about them marks of antiquity. That of East Hanningfield, which is in the perpendicular style, dedicated to All Saints, was new roofed and thoroughly restored in 1844. That of South Hanningfield, which belonged to the black canons of St. Augustine at Leeds, in Kent, a small building with a wooden belfry, still retains one of its original Norman windows. And in that of West Hanningfield are some ancient monuments and inscriptions, which attest its antiquity. In the chancel is an altar tomb of the Cloville family, covered with grey marble, but the inscription has been rendered illegible by time. In the south aisle is an antique stone, from which the brasses of a man and a woman have disappeared, and here we find engraven—

“Isabel Clovill and John her son lie here. The last mentioned John departed this life the 23rd day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1361. God have mercy on their souls.”

There are several charitable endowments for the benefit of the poor in these parishes, the most considerable of which consists of a house, barn, and 19 acres of land, at Hockley, left by Richard Cannon, in 1605, which is shared by the poor of West Hanningfield and Rettendon. Lady Cæsar, in 1635, gave a rent-charge of £5, out of Fremnals, at Crows-heath, between the poor of East and West Hanningfield, Downham, and Ramsden Crays; the widows of West Hanningfield have 40s. a-year out of Helmon's farm, left by Ann Humphries; and the poor of South Hanningfield have the interest of £50, left by Elicia King, in 1813, and £100 (subject to the repair of the donor's tomb) by Susan Langley, in 1839.

RETTENDON.—Beyond the Hanningfields, and running up to the Crouch, which there divides Chelmsford and Rochford Hundreds, lies the parish of Rettendon, with its wide Common, now in the course of enclosure. The church is upon a commanding eminence, which affords a fine view of the vale of the Crouch—Battles Bridge lying below, with the masts of the light shipping which keep up commercial intercourse with the metropolis and the coal districts, peering above the trees. Beyond, lie the sloping lands, the scene of the fierce conflict between Edmund and Canute, with the farm-houses and hamlets now in peaceful quiet, up to Rayleigh and towards the Thames. As early in our history as 673 this parish was given by Etheldreda to the nunnery which she founded at Ely. In 1108 it became part of the possessions of the Bishops of Ely, and under them the manor-house, a little north-west of the church, was a place of

some importance, with its high-paled park, and its goodly stock of deer. It was alienated, however, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Subsequently the great family of the Bouchiers possessed property here. The manor of Little Hayes took its name from the family of De la Haye; and, coming afterwards into the possession of Sir Henry Savill, he conferred it as an endowment upon two professorships of geometry and astronomy which he established at Oxford. The church, dedicated to All Saints, stands close to Rettendon Place; it is a fine building, in good repair; and it contains objects which will repay the passing traveller to turn aside a few paces from the road to visit it. The most striking of these is a sumptuous monument in the east end of the north aisle, to the Humfrey family, which possessed most of the parish from about 1605 till 1727. It is formed of alabaster and white and grey marble, beautifully varied, and is thirty feet high and six wide, with statues of members of the family, weeping boys, and cherubims. Two noble Corinthian pillars, exquisitely chiseled, support an arched dome of grey marble, which surmounts the whole. Between the pillars are the arms of the family and military trophies; and on each side is a niche, within which are two life-size statues standing on marble pedestals—the one of an infirm old man leaning upon a stick; the other of a lady with her foot resting on a human skull. Iron railings surround the monument, and the enclosed space, sixteen feet square, is paved with marble, alabaster, and porphyry. This splendid memorial of an extinct family was erected in accordance with the desire of Edmund Humfrey, an old bachelor, and the last of his line, who died in 1727. The inscription records that he gave the estate to William Ffytch, Esq., of Danbury Place, on condition that he should pay £20 a-year for ever for a school, to be erected in the parish; and his estate at West Hanningfield to Humphrey Sydney, Esq., of Margaretting, whose descendant now occupies it. In the same aisle are brasses of two men, and beneath one of them the stone records—

“Here lieth interred the body of Richard Cannon, Esq., who, amongst other charitable workes, did give and assyre unto the poore of this parish five pounds in landes per annum for ever, to be distributed everie saboath day in bread to the poore of the said parish; and he died without issue the xx of December, in the year of our Lord God, 1605.”

Besides these funeral monuments, the sacred edifice contains some older memorials of its Roman Catholic worship—a beautiful piscina, a part of an ancient screen, and some elaborately-carved old benches, such as those in which the monks used to dose over their beads, ere the Reformation disturbed their slumbers.



Besides the charities before noticed, Mrs. Ann Humfrey left 40s. a-year out of Chervilles, in West Hanningfield, for poor widows; and a lady whose name has disappeared with the brass from the church which recorded it, gave £4. a-year to be distributed to the poor in money, the first Sunday after Easter.

**RUNWELL.**—THE ANCIENT SEAT OF THE FLEMYNGS.—To the right of Rettendon, and extending higher up the vale of the Crouch, lies the parish of Runwell. This lordship, which comprised twelve farms, was granted by king Athelstan, about 930, to the cathedral of St. Paul's. It was seized by the conquering Norman, who, however, found church property too hot to hold, and restored it. Henry VIII. grasped at it, and actually granted it to Sir Anthony Browne, but died before the transfer was formally completed. The Dean and Chapter therefore continued to hold it till they exchanged it with Edward VI. for the manor and advowson of Mucking, High Easter, and other church property. The manor is now the property of Thos. Kemble, Esq., and a new and elegant hall in which he resides has risen up, the old one having dwindled down to an ordinary farm-house. Cardinal Wolsey had an estate in the parish, granted by Henry VIII.; but the site of the lordly prelate's property is now matter of doubt. Flemyngs, however, now part of the estate of Sir John Tyrell, which was the chief seat of the ancient family of that name, must in the 14th and 15th centuries have overshadowed its humbler neighbours, and by its extent and grandeur have distinguished Runwell from all the surrounding parishes. We have no record, no representation of it in its splendour; but a writer in the last century describes it in its decay, as formerly a very noble and extensive building:—

“Fifty spacious rooms and a large chapel (till a fire consumed about thirty of them, at the time of Mr. Parker's possessing it) was not more than half the original house. Adjoining to the chapel there was a burial ground, as appears from the many bones, skulls, and parts of coffins that have been frequently disturbed from their place of interment by the diligent plough. There were likewise belonging to it an extensive park, a large warren, fine canals, delightful woods, and in short everything conducive to render it a most elegant and pleasing country seat. But what will appear almost incredible to those who have formed their notions of Essex prospects by riding only from London to Harwich, this house commands a view over parts of this county and Kent, including more than thirty parish churches.”

Arched roofs and antique carvings and paintings, attested its magnificence and antiquity; but John Tyrell, Esq., of Hatfield, despoiled the venerable mansion of many fine paintings on glass. Here the Flemyngs lived in great splendour from the time of Edward III. down to the close of the 15th century,



when the male line failed. The estate came, in 1692, through two nieces, the heiresses of the Sulyards, to Charles Parker, Esq., not one of the present Essex family, but the son of an eminent physician in London, who married Anne; and the daughter of the other, Dorothy, was married to John Tyrell, Esq., of Billericay, from whom the present representative of that ancient family is descended. A curious ancient gable and a noble window are nearly all that time and the flames have left of this palatial residence, which, it has been remarked, must have been one of the most attractive spots in the neighbourhood of the metropolis; and "it is indeed difficult to account how fashion should have so far overcome taste as to compel the latter to abandon Flemynge's Hall to neglect and dilapidation."

The church contains various monuments to the memory of former residents of Flemynge. By the wall on the left is an ancient stone, with effigies in brass, to Eustace Sulyard and his three wives; and on the right is a monument of grey marble to Edward Sulyard, who died in 1692, "the last of his house and family." On a black marble stone within the chancel is the following—

"Here lieth interred the body of Charles Parker, gent., late of Flemynge, and Anne, his wife. Here also lieth the body of Charles Parker, gent., who died September 25, 1753, *ætatis suæ* 62. The mother of the late Charles Parker, gent., her maiden name was Ann Sulyard, one of the nieces and coheiresses of Edward Sulyard, Esq., of Flemynge."

The only charities in the parish are three almshouses, one of which is situate close to Rettendon Common, and the two others near the church; but by whom founded neither record nor memory informs us.

WOODHAM FERRIS.—Recrossing Rettendon, and its boundary on the opposite side, we enter the parish of Woodham Ferris. Passing the neat homesteads, with their tracts of well-cultivated arable land, we reach the village, pleasantly situated upon a hill, which overlooks the Crouch. Further to the East is Dengie, and below is Hull Bridge, as it is paradoxically called, for it is a bridgeless stream, at which the traveller has to await the tide, or to ferry over, to reach Rochford Hundred. The parish takes its name from the noble family of Ferrars, who possessed it soon after the Conquest, through a son of one of those Norman lords who came in and shared the spoils of the land. One of these lords, in 1338, obtained a charter for a market here, to be held on the Thursday, from which it appears to have been anciently a place of more importance than at present; and it had also the right to an annual fair to be held "on the eve and day of St. Michael and two days after."

This family of Ferrars distinguished itself in the battle-field and the history of the country, and was the root from which the noble house of the Earls of Derby sprung. Robert Ferrars was created Earl of Derby by King Stephen, in 1138, for his daring bravery and services at the battle of the Standard in Yorkshire. Royal favour afterwards waned, and the family was stripped of this honour; but Earl Ferrars fought with Richard in the Holy Land, and died there in 1191. William Ferrars was created Earl of Derby in a solemn manner, and by special charter, by King John in 1205, and the monarch, we are informed, "with his own hands girt him with a sword,—the first who is recorded to have received that honour." In this family the lordship continued till 1530, the great family of De Woodham holding under them. At one period it belonged to the De Greys, from whom sprung the unfortunate Lady Jane; and after passing through various hands, by whom much of the parish was dis-afforested about 1612, it is now part of the estate of Lord Rayleigh, Joseph Strutt, Esq., having purchased it in 1743. There appear to have been some fine old manor-houses in the parish, protected after the fashion of former times, as that of Woodham was moated round, and so was Edward's, on an eminence a mile from the church, once the seat of a branch of the Mildmay family, which we find described in the last century as then wearing "a look of majesty and grandeur." Edwin's Hall, too, erected by Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of York, in 1576, was a fine mansion in the Tudor style, surrounded by a moat. But most of these have been reduced and modernized, and are occupied as ordinary farm-houses.

The church, dedicated to St. Mary, is a spacious building in the mixed styles of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries; but it has only a wooden belfry and one bell, raised as an apology for the tower of brick and the village peal, which split and fell in 1703. To the antiquarian the interior will be found interesting from its sedilia of three arches in the chancel, the remains of a richly carved old screen, and some antique benches; and the taste of the visitor is attracted by a beautiful piece of statuary, on the left of the communion table, raised, as the family inscriptions tell us, by Sir Samuel Sandys, over the body of his mother, the wife of the Archbishop of York, who died "5 February, 1610, at the rising of the sun." The lady is represented as kneeling between two pillars, in a niche of black marble; above is a phoenix; and on each side the figures of Time and Death.

The charities for the poor consist of £63 in the Three per

Cents., purchased with £50, left by Lady Falkland, in 1776, for a supply of bread; the rent of a barn and 15 acres of land, given by George and Eliza Woollard, in 1729; and the produce of the "Poor Orchard," which brings in about two guineas. The church lands comprise a cottage, garden, and five acres of arable.

**BICKNACRE PRIORY.**—Turning towards Chelmsford, we pursue our way to Danbury; but ere we reach that elevated spot we enter the hamlet of Bicknacre, divided between the three parishes of Woodham Ferris, Danbury, and Hanningfield, and our attention is arrested by the ruins of the old priory, which lie close to the road-side, on the left. Prior to the reign of Henry II. a hermitage stood on this spot, where the religious recluse lived shut out from the world by the surrounding wilderness. From the situation and sanctity of the cell it was deemed a proper spot for a more pretending monastic institution. That monarch accordingly granted the site, and gave large funds for the purpose; and the priory for black canons, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist, was erected and endowed by Maurice Fitz Geoffry, then sheriff of Essex, about 1157. The land around was the property of the prior; and about 130 years afterwards we find that Edward I. gave leave to this ecclesiastical lord to impark or enclose his wastes, which comprised 60 acres "in Woodham Ferrers and Danbury." By license from the same monarch, Andrew de Woodegrie gave to the priory 40 acres in East Hanningfield; John Turpyne, 30 acres in Danbury; and William Ferrars, 30 acres in Steeple. At subsequent periods similar gifts were made to it of lands and houses lying in the surrounding parishes; so that at one period this monastery possessed the manor of Bicknacre, and 30 messuages; a thousand acres of arable, meadow, and pasture land; £5 yearly rent; with manorial rights, such as court-leet and view of frank-pledge, in Burnham, Chelmsford, Danbury, Downham, East and West Hanningfield, Mayland, Norton, Purleigh, Stow, Steeple, and Woodham Ferris—these latter rights being then reckoned as worth £40. 10s. a-year. The prior and monks, however, appear to have been either very improvident managers, or they indulged extravagantly in good living and the profuse hospitality of the time; for, though thus tolerably endowed, they frequently felt the vulgar want of money. In the 15th century they are described as being "in a state of the utmost poverty," the result of inattention and accident. In 1506, when Edmund Goding, the prior, died, there was only one monk in the house, and the monastery was for a time left to neglect and decay. In this state of things it was grasped at

by the brethren of Elsing-Spittle, in Bishopsgate, London, who humbly petitioned Henry VII. to have this priory and its possessions united with their own; and the king, after having assigned one of the manors, which lay in Woodham Ferris, to the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, granted their prayer. After holding the property about 30 years, the dissolution drove them out; and in 1539 Henry VIII. granted the whole to Henry Polsted, from whom it passed to Sir Humphrey Mildmay, to Lord Barington, and to Sir Francis Sykes, who is the present lord of the priory domains, and owner of the soil. The original buildings of the monastery appear to have been extensive; and part of them were occupied as a farm-house so late as 1812. Labourers are yet living who have slept in the cloistered cell or chapel transept. But all these buildings are now demolished. The foundations have been stubbed up, and the plough passes over the site of the "long drawn aisles," where the religious processions passed chanting the Miserere, and the refectory room where the monks feasted their guests. The only fragment left is a noble pointed arch, which formed the grand entrance, and supported the western tower. It stands in the midst of an arable field, and we found it surrounded by a wheat crop. Even this relic was at one time in peril. The pick-axe of agricultural improvement was raised against it; but Sir Francis Sykes came to the rescue, and not only was the arch saved from the hand of the human spoiler, but Mr. Chapman, the occupier, secured it against the assaults of time by two strong iron bars stretched across, and screwed up at each end. A narrow roof of modern tiles, too, was added, to keep out the wet. Under this shelter the workmen are said to have deposited the bones of some of the slumbering monks, disturbed in the excavations; and there lie prior and canon, mingled together in their airy tomb, fully 30 feet high, above the arch beneath which they once trod.

The materials of which the priory was erected, judging from this sample left, were lumps of conglomerated gravel, as firm as iron-stone, which are still dug out of the neighbouring lands, as they are occasionally struck upon by the plough. Flints, pebbles, and pieces of Roman bricks and tiles, too, were employed, the latter of which seem to indicate the former existence, in the vicinity of a ruin of much more ancient date. The walls were dressed with stone, the interior of the archway being formed of finely rounded pillars; and in a portion of the wall remaining is a stone bracket, on which has evidently stood a small statue, probably a figure of the Virgin or of St. John. From the top of the archway on the right, a huge beam, which supported

part of the priory roof, projects with broken and jagged end, pointing, like a skeleton arm, to the spot where the body of the main building extended. While standing upon the thistle and the wild mallow in the old gateway, gazing upon the rural scene around, and thinking upon the past, the lines of the poet involuntarily recurred to the mind—

“How many hearts have here grown cold,  
That sleep these mouldering stones among!  
How many beads have here been told!  
How many matins here been sung!  
On this rude stone, by time long broke,  
I think I see some pilgrim kneel;  
I think I see the censer smoke,  
I think I hear the solemn peal.  
But here no more soft music floats,  
No holy anthem’s chanted now;  
All’s hushed except the ring-dove’s notes,  
Low murmuring from yon beechen bough.”

DANBURY.—THE TOMBS OF THE CRUSADERS.—Passing on to Danbury, we find ourselves upon the loftiest hill in Essex—an important military station, as we have already seen, of the Dane, and probably of the Roman before him, as the peculiarly shaped bricks of that people, of which the wall of the north aisle of the church is partly composed, seem to show that this strong and elevated point, from which we can command a view of the greater part of the county, and behold the white sail floating up the river to Maldon, was at least an outpost of the imperial conquerors. The remains of the military works still to be traced, are, however, probably Danish. The rude freebooters, when they had obtained a footing on the spot, proceeded to secure it by raising their huge ramparts, and building their strong castle—for though not even a straggling ruin can now be traced, it is probable a castle stood here; and the lines of the fortifications are yet visible, enclosing the ground on which the church, the rectory house, and part of the village stand. As we look down from these heights, and imagination carries us back to the days of old, we think we see the gleam of the battle-axe of the rough sentinel as he paces to and fro on yonder mound, or hear the clangour of the fierce strife which must often have taken place at the foot of these hills, or behold the victorious hordes as they return to the camp loaded with spoil, and dragging after them their captives from the surrounding parts of the county. How happily does all this contrast with the quietude of the rural village! Cattle browse undisturbed upon the ramparts; a road-side inn is perched on the highest point of the hill, perhaps on the site of the castle keep; and the inhabitants of the towns and farm-houses in the country below, far away as

the sight can reach, sleep undisturbed by dreams of the coming sword.

Now we are upon the hill-top, let us enter the old church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist. We shall here find memorials of the days of the Crusaders not to be exceeded by any others of the kind in the kingdom—not even, we are told, by those in the Temple Church. The interior of the sacred edifice has been thoroughly restored within the last ten years, and has an air of modern convenience and taste. Those richly carved benches and stalls in the chancel are the work of the artificers of to-day. So, too, is that beautiful stone altar screen, with its crocketed pinnacles. But here is a piscina, and part of the sedilia, which speak of ancient days; and a portion of the building is of very old date. From its high situation it has suffered much from lightning. In 1402, in particular, the nave and aisle, and part of the chancel, were destroyed; and the superstitious inhabitants of those days confidently asserted that a diabolical spirit was observed going into the church in the shape and habit of a menorite friar, and there making these ravages and this devastation. Hollingshed notices this, and in the “Devil of Danbury” we find the following record—

“Vpon *Corpus Christi* day, in the yeare 1402, the third of Henry the Fourth, at euensong time, the Devill entred into this church, in the likenesse of a Gray frier, and raged horribly, playing his parts like a Devill indeed, to the great astonishment and feare of the parishioners: and the same houre with a tempest of whirlwind and thunder, the top of the steeple was broken downe and halfe of the chancel scattered abroad.”

The spire was again struck, and twenty feet of it burnt, in 1750. Thus much of the fabric has been rebuilt; but here, under arches in the wall of the north aisle, beneath windows of the time of Edward I., are objects that attest its antiquity—the recumbent figures of two cross-legged knights carved in wood, and near by, a third, removed from a corresponding arch in the south side, and reclining on a basement of brick; the crossed-legs attesting them to be veritable crusaders of the days of Richard the lion-hearted or Edward I. The feet of each figure are supported by a lion; and every lion and every man are in a different position—a fact which a learned antiquarian of the last century very ingeniously endeavoured to torture into an emblematic meaning as to the manner of their deaths.

These are undoubtedly effigies of three crusaders of the De Santo Carlo, or St. Clere family, the former lords of the parish, who came in with the Conqueror, under whom, as statesmen and warriors, they obtained high honours: the name of Hugh De Santo Carlo appears as one of the witnesses to King Stephen's charter, in 1136. The body of one of these crusaders



was discovered about 80 years ago. On the 16th of October, 1779, as some workmen were digging a grave for Mrs. Frances Ffytche, in the north aisle, beneath the niche in the wall containing the effigy of one of the warriors, they discovered, about 30 inches beneath the pavement, a massive stone, covering a leaden coffin, without any vestige of an inscription. This was found to contain an elm coffin, firm and entire; this again enclosed a shell, covered with a thick cement of a dark olive colour and resinous nature. Within this was found the body, "lying in a liquor or pickle, somewhat resembling mushroom catsup, but of a paler complexion and somewhat thicker consistence." A Mr. White tasted the liquor, and found it to be "aromatic, though not very pungent, partaking of the taste of catsup, and of the pickle of Spanish olives." The body was tolerably perfect; no part appearing decayed but the throat and part of one arm. The flesh everywhere, except on the throat and face, appeared exceedingly white and firm. The face was of a dark colour, approaching to black. The throat, which was much lacerated, was of the same colour. The body was covered with a kind of shirt of linen; and wide antique lace was affixed to the bosom. The laceration of the throat appeared to have been produced by the decay of the pillow, and the falling back of the head. There was no hair on the head. Within the coffin were flowers and herbs in abundance, which the pickle had preserved quite perfect, though discoloured. The length of the corpse was only five feet, though the coffin was longer; and the impression conveyed by the body was that of beauty and youth. Whether it bore the characteristic mark of a dead crusader was not ascertained, as some ignorant and meddling bystander thrust down his stick, and broke off one of the feet at the ankle. The coffins were again religiously closed, and the body re-consigned to its long resting place.

In the church are two old inscriptions, one in French, to the wife of Sir Gerard Braybrooke, who died in 1414, and the other in Latin, to Gerard, his son and heir, who died in 1422, "On whom the Lord have mercy." In the old Catholic times there were three chantries in the parish, founded by the Darcies or the St. Oleres, and well endowed. No record tells where these religious houses stood; but a writer of the last century asserts that one of them was the house in the street opposite the Griffin, then in the occupation of Edmund Baker; the second a house standing apart from any other building, on the north side of the road near the street; and the other, in which the antique church-fashioned windows were to be seen, the messuage on the north side of Horn-row. The advowson



of Danbury and the manorial rights have now settled in Sir W. B. Bridges, Bart.

**PALACE OF THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.**—Descending the hill, the palace of the Lord Bishop of Rochester, with its forest of tall Tudor pinnacles, appears on the left, its noble park extending about a mile by the road side nearly up to Sandon Bridge. Of this property, and indeed of the whole parish, Geoffrey de Mandeville was lord at the time of the grand survey. It afterwards came to the family of De Santo Carlo. The De Veres, the Greys, the Darcies, and Sir Gerard Braybrooke, afterwards possessed it; and in the reign of Edward VI. it was purchased by Sir Walter Mildmay, who built the old mansion of Danbury Place. There is no doubt, however, that a noble residence had stood here at a much earlier date. Mention is made of the park of William de St. Clere at Danbury in the time of Edward I. It has even been conjectured that the same tough and knotty oaks, which adorn the park of the Lord Bishop of the diocese in the 19th century, branchless by time, and their trunks whitened by the storms of ages, “beheld the stern era of the Norman rule.” In the last century Danbury Place was the residence of the Ffytche family; but after the death of Lady Hillary, in 1828, the park estate of 250 acres, was bought by John Round, Esq., when the ancient mansion being found irreparable, it was pulled down, and the present noble pile erected near its site. It was completed in 1834, and about 12 years after, it was purchased by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as a palace for our bishops, for the sum of £24,700. The visitor, as he advances towards it along the curved carriage way from the lodge on the northern side of the park, is struck with the olden appearance of its walls and pinnacles. It appears to be not merely in good imitation of the Elizabethan style, but to have been really erected in the 16th century. This is chiefly the effect of artificial means employed at the time of its erection to give to it the hue of antiquity—followed up by the sobering course of the last quarter of a century. The building, with its minarets, pinnacles, and tall clustering chimnies, which are in excellent keeping with the present character of the place, has a very imposing appearance. The entrance at the west front stands boldly out from a recess, and presents a fine specimen of old English architecture. The door leading from the porch to the vestibule is of solid oak, four inches in thickness, studded with octagon-headed pegs, and chastely panelled. From the vestibule, the ceiling of which is finely panelled, access is obtained to the principal suite of apartments—first the library,

26 feet square, well stored with those classical treasures, and works on divinity, in which the present Right Rev. occupant is so deeply versed ; and the apartment is rendered a meet place for quiet study by a sequestering belt of evergreens skirting the lawn, upon which it looks out. Over the mantel-piece is a fine painting of the Duchess of Athol, aunt of the Lord Bishop. Next is the drawing-room, 28 feet by 21, but appearing much larger from the base of a small octagon turret forming a part of it ; and adjoining these the ante and dining-room, the latter 30 feet by 21 ; the height of these rooms is 16 feet ; the floors are of polished oak ; and the ceilings are panelled in a style of great richness, a space of about four feet in the centre of each being filled with husks and seedlings intertwining each other, and bound together with a ribbon. The whole of this suite of apartments communicate with each other by means of large folding doors, which either swing back or run into the walls, and, with their panelling of pure white and gilded mouldings, they have a chaste appearance. A beautiful effect was produced during Mr. Round's occupancy, by huge mirrors fixed in the wall, extending nearly from ceiling to floor, so as to reflect the green woodlands or the white wintry scene of the park without. But these are gone ; and in fact, good taste and subdued elegance, not profuse luxury, appear to have prevailed in all the arrangements and furnishing of the palace. A stone passage communicates with the other apartments—the breakfast room, in which is a good portrait of the Duchess of Kinnoul, the grandmother of Lady Murray,—the rooms of the domestic retainers of the family, and the culinary realms of the palatial residence. The principal staircase, in four divisions, leading to the sleeping and dressing-rooms above, is of oak ; and at the head of the first division is a fine full-length portrait of the present Lord Bishop. The prospect from the top of the palace is truly magnificent. The towns and villages far away are seen here and there dotted upon the landscape. The rich woodlands of the surrounding neighbourhood, with the variations of hill and dale,—the adjoining hamlet with its church-crowned hill, wrapped in the historic recollections of ancient days,—the extended park below, and the fertile district around, impart, as we gaze, a character of splendour and a sense of interest to the scene.

The chapel, the only addition to the building since Danbury Place became an episcopal palace, is entered from the interior. It is an elegant little building—a sort of miniature cathedral, the centre being left clear, and double rows of oaken stalls, with carved heads, running along each side. Its panelled roof,

elaborately-carved oaken altar screen, and windows of coloured, figured, and frosted glass, render it an elegant appendant of the episcopal palace. The grounds in the rear are laid out in tasteful parterres, and lead to winding walks in the park, or to the kitchen gardens, which are not very extensive, but are kept, with the greenhouses and vineries, in excellent order. As the departing visitor looks around the park he catches glimpses through the trees of roofs which have been raised here and there since Bishop Murray became the occupant, for his lordship loves to have all the dependants of the domain about him; and it is told of him at Bromley, where he acted upon the same patriarchal plan, that a successful horticulturist, who carried away the prizes at the shows, far and near, observed—"After all, I cannot beat the bishop, for he grows his own servants."

The charities of Danbury consist of about 40 acres of land in the parish of Purleigh and Woodham Walter, part of which were left by John Lannesdale and his wife in the reign of Edward II., for the repair of the church and the relief of the poor; and on the south side of the common two cottages have been erected as alms-houses by the trustees. The poor also enjoy the rent of four acres of land, the gift of a now unknown donor.

**SANDON AND THE BADDOWS.**—Nestling at the foot of the hill, with its small and ancient church half hidden in a cluster of elms, lies the village of Sandon, of which the lordship has come down from the old barons, through Woolsey, and the Maynards, and the Abdys, to G. B. M. Lovibond, Esq. The Rev. Brian Walton, the editor of the Polyglot Bible, was once rector here, but was expelled in the political and religious strife of 1641. He was, however, reinstated 19 years after, and was subsequently Bishop of Chester. His wife lies buried in the church, in which there are some curious monumental brasses.

The next parishes are the Baddows, Little and Great. Little Baddow is a scattered village, the parish stretching in some places beyond Danbury. With the Chelmer flowing on one side, and the navigable water up to Maldon within sight on the other, it presents, on its wooded high lands, many a picturesque scene, especially about "the Rodney," so well known to the summer pic-nic party. Its lordships and manorial rights have passed down from the great Earl of Bologne and other Norman barons, through the Filiols, the Pennyngs, the Barringtons, and the Shutes, to Lord Rayleigh, who is the present possessor. Nestling amongst the woods at the verge of the parish, on the rising ground above the vale between it and Danbury hill, stands the lodge or manor-house of Riffhams, the

neat modern seat of J. R. S. Phillips, Esq. The estate, which was possessed by the Earl Goodwin, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, came into this family by the marriage of the Rev. Charles Phillips, vicar of Terling, with a daughter of Sir Robert Clarke, a man of some celebrity in his day, being one of the Barons of the Exchequer in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Graces, which takes its name from the family of Le Gras, its first lord, descended from them to the Darcy's, and through others to a branch of the Mildmay family. The old manor-house was then a noble building, approached by a long avenue of lofty trees, many of which still remain ; and, notwithstanding the desolation of the weedy and moss-grown walk between, they leave an impression of the former grandeur of the place. Here, upwards of 200 years ago, dwelt Sir Henry Mildmay, celebrated as a soldier, having been knighted on the field of battle for his valour in the wars of the Irish rebellion. Morant states he was active as a politician in the days of the Commonwealth, having been a member of Oliver and Richard Cromwell's parliaments from 1654 to 1659 ; but this is evidently a mistake, as it appears by his monument he died in 1639. His son, Henry, was five times returned for Essex, and served in the parliaments of Charles II., and William and Mary. In the last century the mansion was occupied by Lord Huntingtower, but a remnant only remains, and is now tenanted by the farmer of the neighbouring lands. The memory of Sir Henry Mildmay is perpetuated by a stately monument on the north side of the communion table in the church, where his statue is seen in a reclining posture, under a canopy, the dome of which is supported by pillars of black marble. He is clad in armour, with a sword by his side, and a truncheon in his hand ; at the foot are two female figures kneeling, the one, elderly, in a scarf and hood, the other, young, and gorgeously arrayed ; and underneath is an inscription in Latin. Beneath are the following lines :—

“Eques Auratus, well may he be sayd,  
Whose Coyne, not warlike courage such hath made :  
But unto Mildmay, Miles we afforde,  
As knighted in the field by his flesht Sworde ;  
That sword which Tyme shall never sheathe in rust  
But hangs it as a Trophie ore his dust.”

The entablatures of the tomb are of white marble, gilt and decorated ; and the whole, says an historian of the last century, “is so fine a performance as to merit the attention of every curious traveller.” In the south wall of the centre aisle are two curious female figures in wood, which village tradition asserts are those of two sisters, the founders of the church in the 13th century. Some time since, two graves, immediately

beneath them, were opened, and in one were found three skeletons, in the other two, but without a fragment of coffin, or shred of linen, or any memorial to reveal the names or mark the station of those who had slumbered there for the last five centuries.

There are two sets of alms-houses in this parish, founded, it is believed, by Sir Gobert Barrington, one for two families, near the church, and the other at Coldham gate. The independent chapel, and a house for the minister, were erected by a member of the same family in 1670 for the clergyman ejected from Boreham; attached to it is a school, endowed with £25 a-year out of Butler's charity, with a house rent free, and 20 of the children are clothed and provided with books. Two tenements and an acre of land are vested in the parish officers for the poor.

GREAT BADDOW is within two miles of Chelmsford. A century ago it was described as "remarkable for being one of the sweetest villages in the kingdom, and for the number of its polite inhabitants." The air, we suppose, gave softness to the manners, and a silvery accent to the tongue; but we fear in these days of adulteration it has lost this magic power, and its inhabitants have fallen from this model eminence to the level of the ordinary mortals around them. It retains, however, its picturesque and pleasant character; and there are some features of olden interest belonging to it, from the historical importance of those who were once the possessors of its soil. In the Saxon days it was the property of the Earl of Mercia; and just 800 years ago it was inherited by Earl Eadwina, who aspired to the hand of the Conqueror's daughter, and was killed in a rebellion instigated by unrequited love. This parish, as part of his confiscated estates, was then granted to the monastery of the Holy Trinity, at Caen, in Normandy; but subsequently it came into the possession of the Earls of Gloucester and the Crown, and it was part of the provision settled upon Queen Catherine on her divorce from Henry VIII., having been incorporated by Henry VI. into the Duchy of Lancaster. Jacob Houblon, Esq., purchased it of the descendants of the Pashcal family in 1736; and J. A. Houblon, Esq., of Great Hallingbury, is the present lord of the manor. Two families of considerable repute have left their names upon mansions in the parish. The Sebrights dwelt at Sebright Hall in the reign of Henry II. At Great Sir Hughes's, a mile from the village on the West Hanningfield road, resided Sir Hugh de Badewe, the owner of much landed property in the district, in the time of Edward III. It

was then a noble mansion of brick, with a goodly row of piazzas in front, and it is stated to have had 15 rooms wainscoted—a mark of an aristocratic dwelling in those days—“with fish ponds about it, and all fit for a gentleman’s seat.” This estate was held in petit-serjeantcy, on condition that the owner should keep the king’s palfrey or saddle horse forty days at the king’s charge, whenever he came into these parts, doing suit at the Hundred Court at Chelmsford every three weeks, and paying 6d. to the sheriff’s aid.” Thus, when Queen Victoria visits Chelmsford, Mr. Johnson, the present proprietor, or Mr. Thomas, the tenant, may lay claim to the privilege of finding provender for her charger at Great Sir Hughes’s.

The church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is a spacious and ancient structure, with a massive tower of flint, picturesquely mantled with ivy. In the interior are some ancient inscriptions, but nothing earlier than the following, which appears on a stone in the body of the chancel:—

“John Everard his father’s name  
Did beare, who from Much Waltham came.  
His mother sprung of Flemminge’s race,  
His mother’s mother Gonson was.  
His body sleepes below this stone,  
His spirit up to heaven is gone.  
Deceased the 27 August, 1615.”

Formerly there were two important chantries in the church, one founded by Margaret Coggeshall, for a priest to sing mass and assist the vicar; and the other, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, by Thomas Kille, butler to Henry V. and Queen Catherine, who was buried here in 1449. At the suppression the first, granted to William Mildmay, was valued at £20 16s. 8d; and the other at £14. 13s. 4d. There was a free chapel, too, in the parish, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and well endowed. At the present time a chapel of ease at Galleywood Common is used as a school-room. The charities of the parish are rather extensive. The free school for twenty-five boys was founded in 1781 by Jasper Jeffery, who left property valued at £1,000 for the purpose, which was laid out in the purchase of Pynnings Farm, at Hanningfield, of upwards of 121 acres; and savings of £125 were invested in Consols in 1885. The national schools were endowed by Mrs. H. Pugh with £375, Three and a Half per Cents., which is increased by subscriptions, and 150 children are educated at them. There are five alms-houses for poor families, but without endowment; eight acres and three roods of land are vested in trust for the repair of the church; and the poor have the following bequests—the interest of £319. 7s. Three per Cent.



Consols, given by Mrs. H. Pugh for those not receiving parochial aid; 10s. out of Warren's Hope: £5. 4s. out of Great Sir Hughes's, left by Ellen Sydner in 1636; £5 out of Pitt Place, left by Roger Reader in 1793; £2. 0s. 8d. out of the property of Chelmsford Grammar School; £2. 12s. for the poor, and £1 for a sermon on Good Friday, out of Piers Farm; the interest of £276. 10s. 10d. Three per Cent. Consols, left by Marshall Straight in 1822; and the dividend of £25 stock left by Thos. Trundle in 1824. The latter is for poor women attending the church. The parish clerk has a house and garden, and £5 from the lord of the manor.

SPRINGFIELD.—We have now returned to Chelmsford; and, quitting it again by the road to Colchester, we cross the Chelmer into Springfield, a pleasant village, which from its character and situation may be regarded as a suburb of the county town. The Essex prison, before noticed, crowns the first hill. At the general survey the parish was divided between the Peverell and Gernon families, the former possessing Springfield Hall, which is situated in a pleasant spot, north-west of the church, commanding views of Chelmsford and Broomfield, with the river winding through the vale beneath. Part of the property was afterwards in the Tyrell and Mildmay families; and Cuton-hall belonged to Coggeshall Abbey, which also at one period owned Springfield Barns. The Rev. A. Pearson is now lord of the manors of Springfield Hall and Dukes; and a great part of the parish belongs to Sir John Tyrell, Sir W. B. Proctor, Sir Henry Mildmay, and M. B. Peacocke, Esq. The church is an ancient structure, but was rebuilt in 1586, as appears by the following inscription over the south window—"Praise God for all the good benefactors, Ano. 1586." Part of the ancient rood loft remains, with the old Norman carved font, the piscina, and a sedilia; but the stained glass windows are of modern date. Formerly there were two distinct rectors, two incumbents, patrons, and parsonage houses; but in 1753, at the request of Sir John Tyrell, then patron of both, the Bishop of London united them. Trinity Church, on Springfield hill, was built for the use of the population near Chelmsford in 1843, by a subscription of £2,000, on land given by Lady Mildmay. It is in the Norman style, and is enriched with a fine stained-glass memorial window, to commemorate the heroic act of Miss Gace, who perished in the river in a futile attempt to save a child of Captain Mc Hardy's, in 1844. There are six alms-houses in the parish, four on the green, and two on the Waltham road; and the poor have a rent-charge on Perry-fields of £6. 18s. 4d., left by an unknown donor in the 16th century.



The church and poor lands consist of 12A. 2R. 21P., vested in trust from ancient times, and the proceeds are chiefly applied to the church. A school is founded and a master appointed under Dr. Williams' charity; there are also good national schools in the parish.

**BOREHAM—NEW HALL—THE SEAT OF SIR J. T. TYRELL.—**The next parish, and the last in the hundred in this direction, is Boreham. New Hall, which has been already described as a palace of Henry VIII., and afterwards the property of Cromwell, lies on the left of the high-road, about two miles from Chelmsford; but the fine avenue of trees, nearly a mile in extent, which formerly led to the mansion, has long since fallen before the axe. It is now a nunnery, inhabited by sisters of the order of the Holy Sepulchre, under the rule of Mrs. Blunt, as lady Superioress, who are engaged in the education of the daughters of the Roman Catholic nobility. It is a pleasant retreat, with its lawns, and winding walks, through what is called the wilderness, at the end of which is the cemetery of the sisterhood. On the opposite side of the road stretches the park of Boreham House, well timbered and stocked with deer; and as the traveller ascends a slight hill, the mansion suddenly opens on the view. It lies a quarter of a mile from the road, with a fine sheet of water in front, and an avenue of elms on each side, from which the visitor emerges on a light and open lawn. The mansion is in the Roman style, with façade of wings, and two noble stone archways, supported by columns and pilasters, and has a Paladian portico under which carriages can draw up; the whole length is finished with a light balustrade. It was originally built in 1728, by Benjamin Hoare, Esq., who had purchased New Hall of the Duchess of Montague, and brought from it many fine antique marbles and other spoils, to adorn his new edifice. The interior is fitted up with elegance and taste. The walls of the Grecian Doric hall are richly paneled, and the fittings and entablatures of the doors harmonize with the specimens of antique wood carvings which enrich the apartment, amongst which is "Sacrificing to Hercules," a beautiful specimen of olden art. To the right is the drawing-room, the walls of which are hung with crimson watered cloth, and enriched with paintings by Poussin and other masters. The ante-room is adorned with some works of Rembrandt; and in the dining-room the attention is attracted by a noble marble chimney piece, supported by two finely-sculptured antique figures, while the elaborate ceiling, the showy ornaments of Gibbons, and two fine paintings by Wootton, give elegance and interest to the noble apartment. In the library are splendid specimens

of wood-carving ; and in the front parlour is a large picture by Caracci, of the Siege of Troy. The saloon, however, has been described as "one of the richest, and perhaps the most perfect room, in the Italian style in the kingdom ;" and here, amidst the elegances of modern taste, are collected the family portraits of the house of Tyrell, some from the hands of artists of our own day, others in the rich antique costumes of the last century ; and amongst the treasures of art at Boreham House the visitor will not overlook the likeness of the present baronet, painted by Lucas, and presented to the owner of Boreham House by the gentry and electors of the county, as a testimony to his straightforward honesty of conduct during a quarter of a century of parliamentary service.

Viewed from the road, the mansion wears somewhat of a dull and secluded aspect, but on passing to the rear, a beautiful rural landscape bursts upon the view. The scene stretches over a vale sloping from the mansion down to the Chelmer, rich with pasturage and all the beauty and business of rural life—the park, with its spreading foliage and studding waters,—the distant corn-fields, green with spring or fading into the mellowness of autumn, flocks and husbandmen scattered here and there, fill the fore and back grounds, till the landscape, rising again, is bounded by the fine old hills of Danbury, and the village spire crowning, and at the same time half lost behind, the distant heights.

Boreham House came into the possession of the family of Tyrell at the close of the last century. That family, however, had been connected with Essex from the time of the Conquest. For fifteen generations the head of the family was knighted ; and Sir James Tyrell was treasurer of the household to Edward VI. Sir Walter Tyrell, a Norman knight, was the founder of the house. In Domesday Book he is found seized of the manor of Langham ; and it is generally believed that his was the hand which accidentally killed William Rufus in the New Forest. This is exceedingly doubtful ; but whether or not the family was connected with the king slayer, "the Tyrells have always been celebrated in the history of the county both on account of their rank and influence and the extent of their possessions." From this Sir Walter descended Sir Thomas Tyrell, of Rumsey Tyrells ; and branches of the family have been located at Herons, Horn-don, Billericay, Springfield, and Hatfield Peverel. John Tyrell, Esq., of the latter place, who was high sheriff in 1770, married the daughter of William Tyssen, Esq., of Waltham House, Herts.—whence the addition to the family name ; and he was the father of the late Sir John Tyrell, who was created

a baronet in 1809. The recent death of the Rev. Charles Tyssen Jenner Tyrell, has left the present Sir John the last male of his race; and as the hon. baronet has only daughters, there is thus a prospect of the extinction of a family which, for the last 800 years, has taken an active part in the parliamentary and other public affairs of the country.

The church stands a short distance from the road, a mile further onward, and is a curious medley of different styles, from the fine old Saxon and Norman down to what has been called "the debased architecture, fashionable in the reign of Queen Elizabeth." Bit by bit has been added as time went on, the last erected appearing to be the south aisle or Sussex Chapel, which renders the church interesting and remarkable for the noble monuments of the Ratcliffes. The chapel was built by Sir Thomas Ratcliffe as a burial place for his family; he brought the bodies of two of his ancestors from the place of their first sepulchre in London to the vault beneath, and raised over it the splendid altar tomb, beautiful even in its battered and broken, and now neglected state. This monument, which is of large dimensions, is formed of various coloured marbles, richly ornamented with figures of animals, articles of armour, and other devices; and on the top rest the effigies of three knights—the first three Earls of Suffolk. The whole is finished with most laborious attention to detail. Although this fine work was executed more than three hundred years ago, the name of the artist, and the price paid to him, have descended to us. Weever, in his "Funeral Monuments," records both; and Walpole, in his "Anecdotes of Painting," says—"The contract for the tomb of this great peer, Thomas Ratcliffe, Earl of Sussex, Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, and a signal antagonist of Leicester, is still extant. He bequeathed £1,500 to be expended on it; and his executors, Sir Christopher Wray, Lord Chief Justice of her Majesty's Bench, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Mildmay, and others, agreed with Richard Stevens for the making and setting it up in Boreham church, where it still remains. The whole charge paid to Stevens for his part of the work was £292. 12s. 8d. Richard Stevens was a Dutchman, and no common artist." The sum named was looked upon as an enormous payment at that period. From about the middle of the seventeenth century, however, the vault—which had received twelve coffins—and the tomb were left to the care of the stranger. Their ownership was disputed—the charge of their preservation was repudiated. A writer in 1768, speaking of the monument, said—"No one can behold it now but must

lament that this masterly performance should have been so violently injured by being exposed not only to the inclemency of the weather, but to the wantonness of every sacrilegious and violating hand." Subsequently to this, Richard Hoare, Esq., of Boreham House, obtained a faculty to convert the chapel into a burial place for his family, and under this he repaired it; but a partial falling-in of the roof has since further mutilated the figures, which appear to have been sculptured out of very soft stone. On the tomb, on black marble tablets within borders of Egyptian porphyry, are three inscriptions in Latin, from which we extract the following brief biographies—

First, of Robert Radcliffe, who died 1542, we are told he was—

"Earl of Sussex, Viscount Fitzwalter, Baron Egremont and Burnel; an honourable knight of the most noble order of the garter, Lord Chamberlain of England and of the household to the mighty Henry VIII., and one of his privy councillors. In the wars in France he distinguished himself amongst the first leaders; and in all consultations, either of war or peace, he was reckoned amongst the chief."

Second, of Henry Radcliffe, who died in 1556, after an enumeration of his titles, the marble record says—

"He was Captain General of the forces of Queen Mary, at which time he rescued her from the disorders that affected the beginning of her reign. Upon the conclusion of hostilities in France, and all his embassies there, he was honoured amongst the chief of the nobility."

Third, Thomas Radcliffe, 1583—

"Executed two considerable embassies from Queen Mary to the Emperor Charles V. and King of Spain; and a third from his royal mistress, Elizabeth, to the Emperor Maximilian. He was viceroy in Ireland, and for nine years together suppressed all rising rebellions there, and prevented Scotland from uniting with them. He was governor of the English northern provinces, where he routed the rebels, and the Scotch who encouraged them, laying waste their castles, and taking or destroying numbers."

The church also contains tablets to members of the Bramston and Tyrell families; and in the church-yard is the mausoleum of the Waltham family, the former owners of New Hall, built of white brick and stone—its shape, it appears, being an imitation of the octagonal Temple of the Winds, at Athens.

The charities of Boreham include the moiety of the proceeds of 193 acres of land in Woodham Ferris and adjacent parishes, left by Edward Butler, in 1717, for the education of poor children here and in Little Baddow; the trustees have with their savings purchased two cottages in Baddow, and invested £430 in stock; they pay £25 to the schoolmaster for teaching 50 children, and clothe 20. Robert Clough, in 1726, left £3 a-year out of a house and land, to the schoolmistress, to teach six girls. In 1652 William Ward left £6 out of Culverts farm, for clothing

four poor widows; bread is distributed from dividends of £119. 11s. 8d. stock, purchased with £100 left by Lady Falkland in 1776; and two poor men are sent to Tweedy's almshouses at Stock.

**BROOMFIELD AND THE WALTHAMS.**—Quitting Chelmsford by the north-eastern outlet, and taking the road towards Braintree, we have the two small parishes of the Chignalls on the left, T. W. Bramston, Esq., being lord and owner of St. James's, which formerly had two churches, one to each manor; but St. Mary's is gone, and the church-yard is the glebe. Smealey belongs principally to Col. Austin.\*

Proceeding along the high road we reach Broomfield, "fruitful in its soil, convenient, pleasant, and healthy in its situation"—as it is described in olden record. The Lodge, the residence of J. Beadel, Esq., with its park-like and pleasant grounds, lies on the right, at the entrance of the parish; and the mansions and the manors of Broomfield Hall, Patching Hall, Wood Hall, and Belstead, further onward. The hall near the church was one of the lordships of Jeffrey de Mandeville; and the Bohuns, the Bouchiers, and Lord Rich were once lords of the soil here; Priors belonged to Blackmore Priory. The church, dedicated to St. Mary, near the village green, is a very ancient structure, having one of those massive round towers usually attributed to the Danes. The family of Manwood, whose works are still the oracles of our courts of law on all matters relating to woodcraft and forestal rights and usages, once resided at Priors; and amongst the monuments in the sacred edifice is one of the date of 1650, to Thomas Manwood, "Son of John Manwood, Esq. compiler of a learned treatise upon the forest laws, and nearly allied to Roger Manwood, knight, and Chief Baron of the Exchequer in the reign of Queen Elizabeth." There is an almshouse for three families in the parish, but without endowment; and the old workhouse, given by Thomas Woollard, in 1700, is divided into tenements for the poor. The church lands consist of 21A. 1R. 27P., including "Daffodilly Grove," given by John Gyne, of Colchester, in 1561, and in general supersede the necessity of rates. The parish school was built by Thomas Christy, Esq., in 1831.

After quitting this parish the road branches off, one passing by Braintree to Sudbury, the other to Dunmow, Saffron Walden,

\* The charities of Chignall St. James consist of a cottage and three acres of land, left by Thomas Woollard, in 1702, the rent of which is distributed in bread, and a rent-charge of 6s. 8d. by an unknown donor, out of Button's Hall. To the poor of Chignall Smealey, Lady Falkland in 1776, left £100, which was laid out in £133. 6s. 8d. Three per cent. Consols, and the dividends are given in bread.

and Stortford. Upon these two roads lie the Walthams. Great Waltham, on the latter, is one of the largest parishes in the county, being seven miles in length, bordering upon eleven others, and containing within itself eight villages and hamlets—Church End, South End, Chatham Green, Black Chapel, How Street, Little Lee Green, Fourth End, and North End. Geoffrey De Mandeville was the original lord of the parish, but it was afterwards divided into seven manors, which have passed through the families of Bohun, Thomas of Woodstock, Lord Rich, and others; the mansions are mostly farm-houses. The rectory was a manor of itself, and belonged to Walden Abbey before the suppression, but was afterwards settled by Sir Thomas Pope, on Trinity College, Oxford, which he founded. J. J. Tufnell, Esq., is now lord of the chief manor, and owner of most of the farm lands around; and his seat of Langleys is a large and elegant mansion, surrounded by a noble park. Anciently this estate was called Marshalls, from a family which possessed it from the reign of John to that of Edward III. It then came to the Langleys, from whom it took its present title. It next descended to the Everards, who were of high standing and considerable consequence in the county; but Sir Richard, one of the “fast men” of his day, having loaded it irrecoverably with debt, it was sold, soon after 1705, to Samuel Tufnell, Esq., who was descended from an honourable family at Hadley, in Middlesex—his grandfather, as recorded on a monument in Pleshey church, having represented Southwark in the time of Charles II.; and he himself was a distinguished member of the legislature, having been selected as one of the plenipotentiaries sent to the congress at Antwerp in 1784. This gentleman, whose estates were swollen by the annexation of most of those of his bachelor relative, Sir William Joliffe, demolished the old house, and erected the present mansion, which stands close to the village, on a gentle eminence, below which flow the waters of the Chelmer; he also formed the park around, which is now well stocked with deer; and the subsequent improvements that have been made, the gardens and pleasant grounds, laid out in modern taste around the mansion, render it the meet home of a wealthy country gentleman.

The church is an ancient structure, in the Norman style of the 12th century, with some antique frescoes upon its walls, which the hand of the modern discoverer has brought to light from the plaster and whitewash beneath which they lay barbarously hidden. Part of the rood loft, and the stoup in the porch, too, still remain; but some of the windows and other



parts of the building are of more modern date. The interior, which was restored and beautified about twelve years ago, contains a number of fine and interesting monuments. Amongst them is one to Peter Curvengen, a rich India merchant, who married the daughter of John Rotterham, son of a Baron of the Exchequer, who owned the rectory manor, and who, as the inscription records, after being 25 years from home, "fell into the hands of Cannajee Angria, admiral to the Sou Rajah, then at war with the English at Bombay, and remained in a miserable captivity five years,"—securing at length the liberty of himself and his companions by his own industry and management; but he died in 1729, as soon as he reached his native land, "in hopes of settling down in quiet and enjoying the fruits of his labours." On the north side, within a marble arch 14 feet high, is a costly monument to Sir Anthony Everard, the owner of Langleys, who was knighted in 1608, and his lady. The effigies are in a recumbent posture, with a skull and hour glass behind them. An inscription in Latin tells that this splendid memorial was erected to Lady Ann Everard, daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston, Knt., descended from the ancient family of the Barnardistons of Kedington, in the county of Suffolk, who formerly bore the most ancient surname of Newmarche or New Market. The date of the monument is 1609; and a tablet on the left records that it was erected by her lord, who died three years after, in 1614. On a similar tablet on the right is the following rather coarse and quaint inscription—

"Here lyes ther carkases, subject to corruption untill ther blessed sowles shall once retorne & wh ~~THEM~~ rise to glorie yf (answering ther uertues) a tombe had bene prpared the had been enshrined in gold or stone more precious."

On the wall in the south aisle is a memorial of the deeds and death of a scion of the same noble family—Hugh Everard, a younger son of Sir Hugh—whose history is thus written on a grey marble stone, above the representation of a ship stranded on the Goodwin sands—

"Not being 18 years of age, he left Felsted school, September 24, 1700, and on the 29th he went Reformado under Captain Whittaker, to convey King William from Holland, tho' then a tempest arose, which destroyed many in his sight, yet the undaunted youth still had glory in view. The invitation of that, and the greatness of his soul, lessened all the threatenings of danger. August 15, 1702, after several voyages and hardships endured by land and sea, a descent being made into Spain, his choice and request put his courage upon action, being the third that landed; and the Spanish horse coming upon them, the commander fell by his hand, and the sword of the man before grazed the side of the young stripling. But now, reader, turn thy triumphant songs into mournful dirges, for the fatal 27th November, 1703, comes big with



tempest and ruin, (such as former ages never knew, and future will scarce credit,) when our brave young man (having changed his ship in order for new achievements) and crew were swallowed up by the unsatiable Goodwin. Thus fell the age's wonder, after he had established a reputation that shall never die.'

At North-end, on the road leading to Dunmow, five miles from the village, is Black Chapel, a small chapel of ease, within which, from its name and situation, it might be supposed Augustine monks sang masses in the olden times; but it is a very unromantic looking building, half tenement and half church. There were several little chapels in the parish in the time of the De Mandevilles, and probably this is the modern representative of one of them. It was endowed with a small farm by a lady of the Wiseman family, who resided at Bullocks, near by, with directions that part of the proceeds should be appropriated to the poor; and other property has been long vested in trustees for the support of the fabric and the minister,—the vicar of Waltham being exempted from preaching there, "lest it might induce him to neglect the mother church."

The charities of the parish comprise an acre of land (since exchanged for a large garden) given by J. and W. Wolmer, in 1542, for repairing the church and bridges; three barrels of white, and one and-a-half barrels of red herrings, in Lent, from Lord Rich's charity; 20s. a year for repairing the church, and 20s. a year for the poor of Northend, left by Thos. Wiseman, in 1580, out of a farm at Great Baddow; 20s. left by R. Everard, in 1616, out of a house at How-street; £5. 4s. left by J. Shuttleworth, in 1723, out of Gravely's, to be given 2s. weekly in bread to 12 widows; the dividends of £276. 10s. 10d., Three per cent. Consols, left by Marshall Straight, in 1822, to be given in bread; 20s. left by John Adams, in 1822, out of property in Romford; £5. 6s. 8d. left by Thomas Wiseman, out of Burgess Well lands, Chelmsford, for charity at North-end, but applied to Black Chapel; and a cottage, barn, and five acres of land, High Easter, left by Jeffery Child, in 1620, for the poor of the same district.

LITTLE WALTHAM is a village on the Braintree road, with well-timbered hills, and lands pleasantly sloping to the river, over which the county built a neat iron bridge seven years ago. Beyond this the houses are seen clinging and clustering up the hill side; but little is presented to delay the footsteps of the traveller. The land has passed through various mutations since the Saxon times, when it was in the hands of the abbot of St. Edmundsbury: one of its old manor houses is now a cottage; and the lordship of Little Waltham, which has absorbed three or four others, belongs to J. J. Tufnell, Esq.

The church and its appendant parsonage, planted on a pleasant hill-top to the left, formerly belonged to the convent of Hatfield Peverel. The sacred structure appears to have been originally Norman, but has windows of the time of Edward II., and a Tudor porch, with patches of a still more modern style. The monument of most interest is a brass in the chancel—a man in armour on a talbot, his hands raised in prayer, and his sword standing by his side, with the following inscription in Latin beneath, in very ancient characters—

“Here lies the body of John Waltham, knt., sometime lord of this village ; who died the 21st of Dec., in the year of our Lord, 1418.”

Another similar brass inscription commemorates Richard Waltham, who died in 1426.

There are extensive charities in the parish. Channels Farm of 129A. 1R. 11P., a part of the suppressed chantry lands, was settled by Roger Poole, in 1558, for the repair of the church, and pious and charitable works : the same trust also holds Hulmans, consisting of 3A. 3R. 37P. of lands,—also a house occupied by paupers, and a granary. The rents of this property are applied to the repairs of the church, the maintenance of the schools, and the payment of the parish clerk. There are also vested in the same trustees 61A. 3R. 15P., of land in Broxted and Takeley, bought with £500. left in 1660—as recorded on a tablet in the church—by John Alleyn, son of the rector, for binding out as apprentices the children of the poor.

LEIGHS—THE HERMITAGE—THE PRIORY.—Beyond the Walthams, extending on to the right and left of the Braintree road, are Great and Little Leighs. The first-named parish is divided into eight manors, Mulsham Hall taking its name from the family of Mulsham, which lived there in 1294. Some of these had formerly fine old moated mansions ; but several of them, and indeed a large portion of the parish, may be said to be in Witham Hundred, as they are in Chatley hamlet, which is appendant to Cressing. The well-known hostelry by the roadside—St. Ann's Castle, said to be the oldest licensed public-house in England—was in very early times a hermitage, where some solitary enthusiast indulged in his lone devotions ; but as the stream of traffic flowed past the door of the recluse, his home became a regular halting place for pilgrims to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket. The property was seized at the Reformation, with the other ecclesiastical spoil, and granted out to a secular holder. Subsequently the hermitage was converted into an inn ; and now—on the very spot where the devotee dined on “herbs from the field, and water from the spring,” and the weary footed pilgrims, on

their return to Suffolk and Norfolk, recounted the miracles and the marvellous splendour of the Canterbury shrine—the joint smokes, the liquor flows, and the carol of the tap-room guest is heard.

In a pleasant and sheltered little vale to the left of the road, at almost the extremity of the parish of Little Leighs, towards Felsted, lie all that remain of the old Priory of Leighs and the princely palace of the Lord Rich—"a secular elysium, a worldly paradise, a heaven upon earth," as it was described at the time it was the residence of the great Roman Catholic spoiler of the conventual establishments. It is a delightful spot; and the noble towers and stately windows which still stand erect and firm, leave upon the mind an impression of its ancient grandeur. The Priory was originally founded in the reign of Henry III., by Ralph Gernon, for Augustine Friars or Black Canons, and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist. In the days of its ecclesiastical power it was a very extensive and venerable pile, surrounded by a large park, well stored with fish-ponds to supply the table on the oft-recurring fast day. The prior was a man of consequence in the land; and here, with their devotions sheltered by hills and woodlands, dwelt the lordly man and his monks, undisturbed for more than three centuries, not only chanting their vesper hymn and doling out food to the poor at the monastery gate, but keeping their pack of hounds, as hounds went at that day; and occasionally indulging in rural sports,—for we find that in 1342 the Prior of Leighs was prosecuted "for enclosing a park called Proureswode, in Leighs, adjoining to the forest of Felstede, and hunting in the forest without warrant or authority"—a species of pastime which in modern times would be called poaching. The possessions of the house comprised four manors—those of Slamsey, with 220 acres of Slamundsey, the mansion of which stood in White Notley; Gladfen Hall, Halstead; and Old Hall and Brent Hall, in Boreham. Besides these the house owned the rectories of Birch and Matching, marsh-lands in Foulness, a mill in Boreham, the estate of Herons in Fyfield, Camseys in Felstead, Wenham Combusta and West Bardolf in Suffolk, and Warneford Hall. The whole of the possessions, when the storm of the Reformation routed the brotherhood from their comfortable nest, were valued at £141. 14s. 8d.; but an idea of their worth at the present day may be gathered from the fact that Old Hall was set down at £16., and the 220 acres of Slamsey at £7. 10s. Sir Richard Rich, who, as it has been seen, was a ready instrument in the hands of Henry VIII. in the suppression of the

monasteries, secured a great part of Leighs Priory and most of its possessions from his royal master. He was a sharp Yorkshireman and a keen lawyer, ready to bend to circumstances and play the obsequious tool to any tyrant for gain,—a man, indeed, whom Sir Thomas More, when upon his trial, had charged with being a perjurer, a gamester, and “of no good character in the parish where they had lived together.” He had been Solicitor-general; and when the suppression of the religious houses was decided upon he was appointed Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations—the officer through whose hands the spoil passed—and this enabled him to lay hold of the fine property at Leighs. He at once proceeded to convert it into a noble family mansion. The cells of the monks were demolished to make way for the spacious apartments and tapestried galleries of the noble; and an elegant banqueting house was built. Tasteful gardens and grounds were laid out around the mansion. Eight hundred acres were added to the parks, one of which extended beyond Littley Green, and was four miles in circumference, swallowing up part of the lands of Waltham in one direction and stretching into Felsted in another. In fact he made it, by good taste and enormous outlay, so fair a place that it came, as before noted, to be regarded as an earthly paradise—a description given of it by a divine of the day, Dr. Walker, even in the pulpit. Here lived the successful lawyer, gathering wealth and growing in royal favour, having been created a Baron by Edward VI. in 1546, and made Lord Chancellor; and he died at his seat of Rochford Hall, on the 12th of June, 1566, possessed of fifty-eight manors in the county, the great park of Pleshey, the hundreds and wardstaff of Ongar and Harlow, the hundred of Rochford, and the rectories or vicarages and advowsons of 20 parishes, besides a mass of other valuable property. His descendants upheld the splendour of Little Leighs for a century, under the title of Earls of Warwick, which they obtained in 1618; but the noble line then became extinct; the estates were partitioned off; and the Priory, having passed through other hands, was purchased by the Governors of Guy’s Hospital about a century ago. These gentlemen have long since disparked the land around, and converted it into productive farms; the mansion, too spacious to find a tenant, has been pulled down; and all that remains of the buildings are two sides of the outer quadrangle (which are occupied as a residence by Mr. Porter, the tenant of the farm) and the noble gateway of the inner court. The latter is a good sample of what the place has been. It is built of red and black brick, with a finely embattled octagon

tower at each corner. The lofty stone archway at the entrance, and the windows of the apartments above, which still contain some fragments of the diamond pane, are richly ornamented; and above the massive wooden doors, which are panelled and elaborately carved, are the arms of the Rich family, cut in stone, with the motto "Garde Tafoy." Care has been taken to preserve the ruin; and on the inner side a new brick arch has been turned to support it; but in the interior the turret stairs have broken down, the floors of the different stories are gone, and a colony of pigeons have made roosts of the rafters over which the Countesses of Warwick tripped to watch the gay cavalcade as it entered the outer court. We should be disposed to say, from their style and freshness, that the gateway and the other buildings are part of the erections of Lord Rich, and that nothing is left of the old original Priory, save perhaps some of the out-offices of the farm, and a fine stone canopy of a fountain, of the time of Henry VII., which stands in that part of a meadow which was once the inner court, with the wild bramble twining through its beautiful arches.

The church of Little Leighs has marks of antiquity about it, but little beyond this to attract the traveller. That of Great Leighs is well worth a visit. The nave and the round tower of flint and stone appear to be veritable Saxon erections. The chancel is of later date; and some of the windows are in the style of Edward II. In the interior will be found some relics of the past—curious old benches, a sedilia and piscina, and a finely crocheted Eastern sepulchre. On a black marble slab, on the floor within the communion rails, is the following inscription:—

"Here lieth the body of Thomas Gyues, who departed this life September 20, 1652, being aged 60 yeeres.

His faith and sickness both together strave  
That Christ might have his soul; his corps the grave;  
Death ends the strife; both conquerors appear,  
Christ hath his soule; his body resteth here;  
His Mary in teares, whilst Death, hir husband's debter,  
Hath laid this stone, but in her harte a better."

The charities of Little Leighs consist of 20s. a year, left by John Smith in 1726, out of a cottage in Waltham; a like sum left by Owen Offlet out of Shalford Hall, given in bread; and the value of 1½ barrels of herrings from Lord Rich's charity.—Those of Great Leighs comprise the Bell Rope House; a house and seven acres of land, purchased with £100, left by Mrs. Fortune Watts in 1698, given on new year's day to ten poor people; and the dividends of £200., Four per cents., left by John Beadel in 1822, half for schooling poor children, and the other half to be divided amongst seven poor parishioners.

WRITTLE.—There is a part of the hundred yet unexplored—the district lying to the north-west of Chelmsford. Striking into it from the New London Road, the parish of Writtle is seen lying calm and quiet in the valley below, with its clustering houses, and its church tower in the midst. Passing the farm of Mr. Robert Baker on the right, and crossing the Wid, we find the village green and the ware-pond, surrounded with neat dwelling houses and cottages; and with the more distant scenery, including tracts of hundreds of acres of woodland, it is a pleasant and picturesque spot. The parish is the largest in the county, including four hamlets, Oxney Green, Edney Common, Highwood, and Cook's Mill Green; it is divided into four quarters,—Town Quarter, Roman's Fee, Highwood, and Bedell's End—and it is 52 miles in circumference. It has been said that its size is its only present distinction; but its church alone will rescue it from this reproach, and the parish itself is rich, if not in relics, at least in olden recollections. It appears to have been a place of some importance from the earliest period of our history; and probably it was a considerable town at the time when Chelmsford was an obscure village. The Roman is reputed to have fixed a station upon the fair spot. It has a strong claim—in our opinion the strongest—to be regarded as the *Cæsaromagus* of that people. It is true the proofs have been demanded in the shape of relics, and they have not been forthcoming. Strong evidence may, however, be found in the ruins of an old hermitage, which lie at the northern extremity of the parish, almost surrounded by woodlands, in the picturesque quarter of the Highwoods. This hermitage was founded, after the manner of the solitary religious recluses, by Robert, a monk, in the reign of King Stephen, and he appears to have been a man of some repute and sanctity, as he received royal assistance in the shape of a grant of the ground, wood for the building, and pasture for his cattle. From his grounds and his herds he was thus able to furnish a goodly table in his retirement—for the belief that these hermits were vegetarians and teetotalers is a popular and poetical fiction; they acted as the pioneers of agriculture, and lived as became good farmers of that day. This cell, which was called Beadman's Berg—"the prayer-man on the hill"—was enriched with further benefactions, and afterwards came into the possession of the Abbot of St. John's at Colchester; but after the dissolution the building fell into decay. The ruins of it which remain furnish the evidence to which we refer, as it will be found on examination that they are composed of red Roman tiles or bricks,—thus clearly showing that the materials were obtained from some erection of



the imperial rulers in the neighbourhood. In later times, too, as already shown, royalty fixed its residence here. The site of the palace of King John is believed to be a spot opposite the Lordship farm, within the boundaries described by the moat; and indeed part of the foundations were excavated in the course of the last century. "The disappearance of all these vestiges of ancient importance," says Suckling, "shows in a very striking light the instability of human grandeur, where neither the stupendous labours of Roman ambition, nor the luxuries of royalty, have left a wreck behind." At the early periods we have referred to most of the lands around were forest. There was a bailiff of the forests of Writtle and half-hundred of Chelmsford, who resided in the parish, and held a house and 180 acres of arable, pasture, and woodland, with 17s. rent, on condition that he watched over these open woodlands, and duly protected the king's rights.

The principal stream of traffic in this part of the county once flowed through Writtle. We find it recorded that

"Before a bridge was built over the river at Chelmsford, the public road to Braintree and several places in the north and north-east parts of the county to London led through Writtle, turning the corner where is at present the sign of the Red Cow, going on to Bayford Tye, and so quite over to Margretting.\* A very large and much frequented Inn, called the Swan, formerly stood in the road near the farm called Shakestones. Generally, for the greatest part of the winter, all carriages, and even horsemen, travelling to Ipswich or Harwich, were obliged to go that way, the ford at Chelmsford not being at those times passable without great danger. In the vicinity of this spot several ancient coins have occasionally been found."

This extensive lordship belonged to Harold, whose brief reign followed that of Edward the Confessor. After his death it fell to the Conqueror; and passing through the hands of various nobles—amongst others of the family of the celebrated Bruce, from which it was wrested when he assumed the sovereignty of Scotland—it fell to the crown by the attainder and execution of the Earl of Stafford, through the enmity of Cardinal Wolsey, in May, 1521. Queen Mary granted it to Sir William Petre, and the head of that noble house sits in the House of Peers as Baron of Writtle. Nine manors have at different periods been parcelled out of the lordship; and some of the old manor-houses which remain afford fine specimens of the domestic architecture of other ages—Bedells Hall, near which formerly stood a cross, taking its name from the celebrated Bishop Bedell, who was born there; and the good farms in the parish are now owned by Lord Petre, A. Pryor, Esq., the Rev. C. G. G. Townsend, and Wadham and New Colleges, Oxford. Much of the land, however, is freehold, and is possessed by J. A.

\* By a custom called "luppe and lusse," every person passing over the Green at certain periods of the year was obliged to pay a penny.



Hardcastle, Esq., M.P., and various other smaller holders, the former of whom has a good house in the village. Anciently there were two extensive parks in the parish. Hoastly or Osterly, or more anciently Horsfrith, lying beyond Cooksmill Green on the road to Ongar, was years ago broken up, its timber felled, and its land brought under the plough; but King's or Writtle Park still remains in a diminished shape, with its fine old Elizabethan mansion and pleasant gardens. Writtle Lodge, or the Great Water House, which stood on the banks of the river at the extremity of the parish towards Chelmsford, was built by George Bramston, Esq., in 1712, and was afterwards a seat of the Fortescue family; but it fell before the destroying spirit of Mr. Attwood, and its outward and inner parks, though still unenclosed, have been handed over to the husbandman. Writtle was formerly a market town, the market-house standing near Little Green. It has also a charter for a fair on Whitsun Monday and the 10th of October; and it has been remarked as extraordinary that this advantage has not been embraced, as "no town in England could better accommodate cattle of every kind, there being so great a quantity of waste land belonging thereto." It forms, with Roxwell, a special jurisdiction or liberty, and has its own coroner; formerly it was subject to no visitation; and at one period the inhabitants refused to attend on county juries, but this being found to rest only on custom, the claim was set aside.

The church is, upon the whole, a fine and massive building; but the changes which it has undergone at different periods give it rather an incongruous character. The principal part of it is in the early English style of the thirteenth century; but there is proof of a church here at a much earlier period. The shape of the old Norman font, carved in hard stone, bespeaks great antiquity; and there was a grant of the church in 1143 made by King Stephen to the Priory of Bermondsey. Subsequently it was granted by King John to the Hospital of the Holy Ghost, at Rome—in consequence the rectory, which is a manor of itself, is called Roman's Fee; but being afterwards seized as the property of an alien institution, William of Wykeham secured it, and in 1399 conferred it upon New College, Oxford, with whom it still remains. On the north and south sides are two small transepts or chapels, belonging to two of the four chantries established here in Roman Catholic times, one being valued at £6. 2s. 4d.; the second at £15. 10s. 6d.; the third at £9. 12s. 6d.; and the fourth at £13. 5s. 3d.; besides which there were endowments for twelve obits and one lamp. The ancient tower, with the bells, fell down on the night of Friday, April 4, 1802, and

being rebuilt in the following summer of red brick, has been pronounced by Suckling "tasteless and inelegant." The interior of the sacred edifice is rich in funeral monuments; though, as the empty matrices show, ignorance or avarice has robbed it of many fine brasses; some, however, remain near the chancel door, representing warriors and their wives, apparently of the period of Henry VII. Amongst the monuments, the most curious—it has indeed been called fantastic—stands against the wall on the north side of the chancel. It is sixteen feet high and six broad, composed of various kinds of marble and alabaster; and the artist has drawn all his figures and illustrations from agriculture and its operations. Between two pillars supporting the cornice is an angel with a sickle, upon a rock, bearing the inscription in Latin—"That rock was Christ," placed on wheatsheaves, on the bands of which are seen the words—"If a corn of wheat fall not into the ground it cometh not up again;" and beneath, "He who has planted, nourished and expiated for us, will assemble and restore us." On the pillar on each side, above the representation of a fan used in dressing corn, is written—"The reapers will gather us." On each side of the pillars are angels weeping, dressed as servants in husbandry; and on a scroll within the fan is an inscription, which tells us that "John Pinchon and Dorothy Weston, once one flesh, now one carcass, wait for, in this tomb, the coming of Christ." Near to this is a marble monument of the year 1515, with the figures of Edward Elliot, his wife, four sons and six daughters, in postures of devotion. On the south of the chancel is the monument, fourteen feet high and seven wide, of Sir John Comyns, who built the mansion of Hylands. Between two urns is the bust of the baron in his robes; and on a tablet of grey marble, bordered with porphyry, the following inscription:—

"Near this place lies entombed the body of that great and good man, the Right Honourable Sir John Comyns, Knt., late Lord Chief Baron of His Majesty's Court of Exchequer; universally esteemed one of the brightest ornaments of the bench, and the ablest lawyer of his time; who departed this life on the 13th day of November, 1740, aged 73. That a character of so much piety, learning, and merit should not be buried in oblivion, but remain a shining example to others, this monument, out of duty and gratitude, was humbly erected to his memory, by his nephew and heir, John Comyns, of Hylands, Esq., 1759."

Beneath is a quotation in Latin from Horace, of which the following is a translation—

"Oh when shall faith, of soul sincere,  
Of justice pure the sister fair,  
And modesty, unspotted maid,  
And truth, in artless guile arrayed,  
Among the race of human kind  
A match to this Justinian find!"

The family arms are engraved on a tablet of black marble, gilt, and encircled with a border of alabaster. Amongst the other stones and inscriptions are several to members of the Petre and Bramston families; and at the east end of the north aisle is a brass of a man and woman kneeling, with a book open between them, above them a human skull, and beneath this inscription, the date being 1606 :—

"Neere to this resteth the body of Edwarde Hunt, late of Wryttle, gent., who lyvinge was much beloved; releevd the poor, and by his last wyll gave in perpetuytie two alms-houses in Church-lane, with an yerely allowance of twentye shyllyngs for their better maintenance. And also hath willed for ever to the poor of this parish, to be yerely distributed on Good Fridaye, x shillings, which sommes are lymnatted to be paid out of a parcell of land called Appesfield, in Chelmsforde parische. As by his sayde will at large appeareth."

The church and the poor of the parish are endowed with numerous charities. To the church is assigned Bumpsteads, a farm of 29 acres; also a tenement called Parkers, now inhabited by poor families, rent free; a cottage on the site of which the boys' national school has since been built; and a garden. The master and mistress of the national schools receive £54. 13s. 4d. out of Blencowe's charity, left by John Blencowe in 1777, for which they teach 33 boys and 22 girls free; the girls' school and the house were built by Mr. H. Lambirth in 1818, and given in exchange for East Hayes, a house which belonged to the church property. Besides Hunt's alms-houses, there are six others, founded by Thos. Hawkyns, in 1500, occupied by poor widows, each of whom has 3s. 6d. a week from the proceeds of Boards and Jordan's, exchanged for Hook's farm in 1850. Besides these, the poor have £5. 6s. 8d. out of houses in Bishopsgate-street, left by Wm. Horne in 1591, to be distributed 2s. weekly in bread; £2. 13s. 4d. for 12 penny loaves to be given to 12 impotent, blind, lame, or poor people, attending church every Sunday, out of Boggis farm, left by Dorothy Davis in 1634; the dividends of £121. 0s. 8d. Three per Cents. left by Lady Falkland in 1776; 20s. out of a house on the green, to be given in bread by the owner, left by Eleanor James in 1737; and 20s. out of Chalk-end farm, originally called the Poor Monk's Gift. Seven acres of land were left, it is believed, by Baron Comyns, for the benefit of the governor of the workhouse, for reading prayers to the inmates. These olden charities have received large additions of late years. The late P. Labouchere, Esq., of Hylands, gave a piece of land on which a school has been erected, and £500 for the poor; the late Rev. Dr. Penrose, vicar, £500; and the sum of £1,000, given by Mr. Attwood for liberty to stop up certain roads, has been invested for the interest to be distributed in clothing, &c.

**ROXWELL.—THE BRAMSTON FAMILY: SKREENS.**—Adjacent to, and just beyond Writtle—of which it appears to have been anciently a hamlet—lies the parish of Roxwell, with its small cluster of houses, its one village inn, its church, and its neat national schools. Beyond are the park and mansion of Skreens, the residence of T. W. Bramston, Esq., one of the present members for South Essex, and lord of most of the surrounding soil. Sir John Bramston, Knt., Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, may be said to be the founder of this old Essex family, whose members have for two centuries taken an active part in the business of the county, and often represented it in parliament. The family itself, however, can be traced back as holding an honourable position in the land for fully 500 years. They were citizens, and ranked amongst the wealthy men of trade. William Bramston was sheriff of London in the 18th of Richard II. (1394). Roger Bramston, the father of the future judge, resided in Whitechapel, but having married a lady of the Cloville family, removed to Maldon about 1600; and here Sir John was born. At an early age he became a student of the common law in the Middle Temple, and his abilities appear to have soon brought him into responsible and conspicuous posts. He was first appointed counsel to the University of Cambridge; then counsel at large to the city of London; then Chief Justice of Ely; and, having been raised to the dignity of Serjeant, with the title of Knight, he was appointed Chief Justice of England on the 14th of April, 1635. In passing through these various stages of his profession he won the character of the best lawyer and the best pleader of his time; and he is described by his contemporaries as “a man of deep learning, solid judgment, integrity of life, gravity of behaviour, and, in a word, accomplished with all qualities requisite for a person of his place and profession.” He lived, however, in trying and perilous days, when arbitrary power in the person of Charles I. was putting forth its most arrogant pretensions, and struggling liberty was trying its strength, and menacing everything, however sacred, which dared to obstruct its way. The celebrated question of ship-money was brought before the Lord Chief Justice; and he was thus placed in the critical position of arbitrator between the king and his irritated subjects. He delivered his opinion in favour of the crown. For this he was impeached by the House of Commons in 1641, compelled to find sureties, and deposed from the judgment seat. “But,” says his biographer, “even in times of tumult and revolution there is no better guide and protection than probity.” Notwithstanding the decision for which he was impeached, such was

the character of this magistrate for uprightness and talent, that in the propositions sent to the king at Oxford in 1642, this clause was inserted—"That his majesty would be pleased by his letters patent to appoint Sir John Bramston Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench." Further, in 1647 it was proposed by parliament to make him one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal, which he declined; but the Lords invited him to sit in their house as an assistant, and appointed him one of the judges of the Common Pleas. He died, however, in the same year, at the age of 78, and was buried in Roxwell church, where, on a marble stone in the chancel, there is a Latin inscription to his memory from the pen of the poet Cowley, of which the following is a translation:—

"Here lies the body of Sir John Bramston, Knt., son of Roger Bramston, Esq., and Priscilla Cloville; who pursued his studies in the different branches of useful knowledge, at Jesus College in Cambridge, and in the law in the Middle Temple, London, with such success that he was made Solicitor of Cambridge as soon as he was called to the bar, after that Judge of Ely, King's Serjeant at Law, and Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench. His first wife was Bridget Mundeford, descended of a very genteel family; his second Elizabeth Brabazan, daughter of Lord Baron Brabazan in Ireland. This worthy, of old honest principles, and the established religion, the most lenient punisher of the criminal, impartial, easy, serious, affable, giving no offence to a single person, much less to either side, during the reciprocal disturbances in the civil wars, on the 22nd of December, in the year of our Lord 1654, and of his age the 78th, leaving behind him three sons and as many daughters, a moderate fortune and unblemished character, went to heaven. What can I wish better to the reader of these lines? Superior to ambition, passion, and every species of corruption, he who was a judge of others was a law to himself; he decided the most intricate points of law with such a perspicuity that the convicted was at the same time convinced. The most able expounder of the law, the most upright observer of justice, lies here. Alas! too-impartial death carries off the best! This so great a man cheerfully waits for his final doom; nor, after having been a judge, does he dread the appearance of his judge."

Below is the following:—

"This truly Latin epitaph, and very elegant composition in verse, by Abraham Cowley, after being a long time concealed, was, by order of John Bramston, Esq., great grandson of the aforesaid John, engraved on a marble stone, out of esteem of the genius of so excellent a poet, and a venerable regard for the memory of so upright a judge."

Two members of the Bramston family were in arms for Charles I.; and when Cromwell and his compeers had passed from the scene of power, the sons of the Lord Chief Justice were distinguished for the loyalty of their house. John, the heir, who at that time represented the county, and afterwards Maldon, in Parliament, was made a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Charles II.; Mandeford, the second son, was made a Master in Chancery, and knighted; and Francis, the third, became one of the Barons of the Exchequer. Often since then the Parlia-

mentary-roll has shown the name of Bramston sent up from Essex; and the following inscription, on a marble tablet over the fire-place in the grand jury room of the Shire-house at Chelmsford, thus records the respect of the county for the last possessor of the estate:—

“This tablet is erected by the Magistrates of Essex to the memory of Thomas Gardiner Bramston, Esq., of Skreens, who, during 12 years, presided as one of the chairmen of their Quarter Session, and in that and every other office connected with the general interests of the county evinced so clear a judgment, a disposition so candid and conciliatory—so unwearied a perseverance in investigating the claims of truth and justice, and such an integrity of purpose in maintaining them as ensured to him the confidence of those with whom he shared his public duties; and afforded a bright example of a character guided by the principles of a truly christian mind. He died the 3rd of February, 1831, in the 61st year of his age.”

The law has given more than one celebrated lord to Skreens. William Skrene, from whom the estate is named, was a learned serjeant of Cliffords Inn, in 1409; and Sir Richard Weston, the owner in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who laid the foundation of a noble family, was a Justice of the Common Pleas. Sir John Bramston purchased it of the family of the Earls of Portland, in 1685—the year in which he took his seat as Lord Chief Justice; and though no description of the ancient mansion has been preserved, it seems to have been one of those old manorial seats, somewhat dark and gloomy, and adapted to defy the battering of the bands of political and mercenary marauders who occasionally disturbed the slumbers of our forefathers in those days. It was demolished at the beginning of the last century; and the present mansion of Skreens was built upon its site by Thos. Bramston, Esq., about 1710. It stands about a mile west of the village and the church, in the midst of a park of about 400 acres, which is studded with venerable oaks, two of them immediately in front of the mansion—

“Trees whose huge branches, whitening in the blast,  
Stand as historic landmarks of the past”—

and, as the visitor traverses the winding carriage way from the high road, his thoughts are carried back to the time when the peaceful hawking party may have halted beneath their shade, or the mailed crusaders mustered under their branches. The house itself is a massive square pile of red brick, very neat, with little exterior ornament, except an elegant stone porch; and, on entering, it is seen that the chief efforts of the architect were reserved for the convenience and good taste of the interior. The hall is a noble apartment, large and lofty, and richly decorated. The splendid marble chimney-piece is surmounted by the Bramston arms, encircled in bold foliage



elaborately carved; and the walls are enriched with three fine old portraits of ancient members of the family, together with trophies of the last Kaffir war, brought home by Captain Bramston, the eldest son of the present owner—various birds, and the head of a buffalo, which fell to his sporting rifle during the intervals of the battles in the bush. The dining-room, too, is an apartment worthy of the hospitality of Skreens; and its walls are thickly covered with portraits of the Bramston family, many of them in the quaint old costumes of former ages, and evidently painted by the master hands of the time. Foremost amongst them is a fine full-length portrait of Sir John, the Lord Chief Justice of England, 1685; Sir John Bramston, Knt., (his son) and his lady, 1660; Anthony and his lady; Francis Bramston, (his third son) 1678; Thos. Berney Bramston, and his lady; and the late Thos. Gardiner Bramston, Esq., whose good name still lives in many of our memories. Above the mantel-piece is a painting by Webber, in 1806, of the glorious scene which placed Sir Eliab Harvey, the father of the present Mrs. Bramston, in the list of British naval heroes—the battle of Trafalgar, with the *Temeraire*, the 98-gun ship which Capt. Harvey commanded on that memorable day, capturing the *Redoubtable* and *Le Fouqueur* of 74 guns; thus adding to Nelson's triumph on that historical afternoon of the 21st of Oct., 1805. An inscription on the corner records that the painting was “presented by the Epping book society, in 1845, to Mrs. Bramston, daughter of Admiral Harvey, G.C.B.” A very good painting of the Admiral himself is found amongst other family portraits in the mansion; and in the library are two fine productions of the painter's hand—Lord Clarendon, when a young man, the only portrait of him in early life extant; and Charles I. and James II. when Duke of York, by Stone, one of Vandyke's best pupils. On emerging from the mansion in the rear, or what may be called the south front, we find winding walks, bordered by green turf and beautiful parterres, and leading in one direction to extensive kitchen gardens; while beyond is a pleasant landscape, with water and clumps of green woodland, and the stumps of old “ancestral trees” raising their whitened arms in the midst.

There are some good old manor-houses in the parish. Newland Hall, with a fine sheet of water in the rear, between which and the house formerly stood a chapel, was once the property of Harold, and an amatory hiding-place of the Eighth Henry, but now forms part of the Bramston estates, together with Tye Hall, which anciently had its moat and its drawbridge. Lord Petre, however, owns Mountneys,



formerly a considerable seat, and Boyton Hall, or the manor of Boyton-Cross, so called from one of those crosses which in old times were planted by the highway side. The church, an ancient stone structure, has been thoroughly restored and enlarged within the last few years. It is believed to have been originally a chapel of ease to Writtle; and about two centuries ago a claim was made upon the parishioners to contribute to the repair of the mother church. The litigation was at last compromised by a deed of the 16th of November, 1597, which set forth—

"That the inhabitants of Writtle having received of the inhabitants and parishioners of Roxwell, towards the reparation of the church and steeple of Writtle, twenty pounds, which said sum we acknowledge to have received of their liberal and free gift, and in no respect of duty. And for the establishing a perpetual peace and amity, and for the avoiding any further question or controversy that may grow hereafter between us and the said inhabitants of Roxwell, for any right or duty towards the maintenance of our church and steeple, do by these presents, release, acquit, and discharge the said inhabitants and parishioners of Roxwell off and from all manner of claims, rights, duties, and demands that we, our heirs or successors, may have against the sayd inhabitants of Roxwell, as for and concerning any duty or demand for and towards the maintenance, repair, or re-edifying of our said church and steeple of Writtle."

The National schools near the sacred edifice were erected by T. W. Bramston, Esq., with houses for master and mistress, at a cost of £800; and £27. 6s. 8d. is applied towards their support from Blencowe's charity in Writtle. The poor also have 6s. 8d. from Davis's bequest in that parish, £1 from the Poor Monk's Gift, 20s. from New College, and the rent of the premises conveyed in 1667 for a workhouse. The rents of Bell-rope Mead and Pest-house Field, and a garden, belong to the church, and are carried to the warden's account.

Dunmow Hundred.

The Hundred of Dunmow is composed of a long and narrow tract of land, stretching from the outer verge of Thaxted towards Saffron Walden at one end, and to Mashbury, within five miles of Chelmsford, on the other—a distance of nearly twenty miles. It is not more than eight miles across at the broadest part, and at some points it narrows to little more than half this distance. It comprises the following twenty-five parishes :—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Barnston .....	<i>Berners-town</i> , from Hugh de Berners.....	1442	195	1781	416 0 0	
Broxted .....	From the <i>brook</i> .....	3149	758	3725	666 0 0	200 0 0
Great Canfield...	From <i>Canes</i> or reeds, in the	2472	470	3330	345 8 0	132 0 0
Little Canfield ..	Roden, and <i>feld</i> —Canefield.	1479	314	1740	410 0 0	
Chickney .....	From the Saxon words, signify- ing <i>chicken water</i> .....	700	68	762	180 0 0	
Great Dunmow	From <i>Dun</i> , a hill, and the	6746	3235	12375	625 0 0	580 0 0
Little Dunmow	Saxon word <i>heap</i> , from the raised Roman way .....	1715	379	2426	515 18 9	
Good Easter ...	From <i>East-st.</i> , or being more	2081	500	2550	240 0 0	120 0 0
High Easter ...	easterly than the Roothings	4725	1043	4675	1020 0 0	164 0 0
Great Easton ...	From <i>East-town</i> , or east of the	2532	937	3717	765 0 0	
Little Easton...	stone .....	1548	396	2169	330 0 0	
Lindsall .....	From the Saxon <i>linden</i> and <i>good</i>	1969	378	2176		†137 0 0
Mashbury .....	From <i>Macy</i> , an owner, and <i>bury</i> , a mansion—Macy's mansion .....	815	91	1000	217 7 9	
Pleshey .....	From <i>Plaisir</i> —on account of its pleasant situation .....	726	351	1010	220 0 0	
High Roothing		1803	439	2550	457 0 0	
Aythorp „	From the River Roden, or	1394	276	1652	366 9 8	
Berners „	the Saxon <i>rode</i> —a cross,	1050	100	998	224 14 0	
Lenden „	and <i>ing</i> , a pasture, from a	907	204	1051	245 0 0	
Margaret „	cross on a common or	1222	274	1242	*314 10 6	
White „	meadow land .....	2520	426	2854	600 0 0	
Morrell hamlet						
Shallow Bowels	From the Saxon words, sig- nifying <i>ledge-hog</i> and a <i>hill</i>	457	151	532	120 0 0	
Thaxted .....	From the Saxon words, signify- ing <i>hay</i> and <i>place</i> .....	6219	2556	9400	1184 11 5	400 0 0
Tilly .....	From the Saxon word, meaning <i>tilled land</i> .....	1040	101	1159	tithe free.	
Willingale Doe	From Saxon words, denoting	1739	518	2221	500 0 0	
WillingaleSpain	<i>goodness of wool</i> —Doe and Spain, from ancient owners	1200	216	1592	†325 0 0	

The Hundred is intersected at some points by deep vallies, which give picturesqueness to its highlands and variety to its soil ; and through some of these low grounds the Roden and the Chelmer, which take their rise in this part of the county, begin feebly to flow. Much of the land is loam or chalky clay, and a large quantity of the barley supplied to the maltings

\* 28s. 10s. 6d. of this is paid to the Rector of Stondon Massey.  
† This is the sum at which it was valued in 1851.

of Stortford and Ware is grown in the district. Lying midway between the two great arteries of traffic, the high roads and railways communicating with Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire, its inhabitants are chiefly employed in local trade and the quiet pursuits of agriculture; but it is a hundred rich in remains and memories of the past. Its two chief towns, Dunmow and Thaxted, still bear in their streets marks of the quaint style of olden times. Many of its churches are beautiful specimens of the magnificence and architectural taste of former ages. The choir of the Priory church at Little Dunmow, with its laughable legend, and the ruins of Tilty Abbey, tell of the ecclesiastical splendour which once adorned the district; and as we ascend the green turf which covers the huge mounds of rubbish at Pleshy and at Canfield, we stand upon all that remains of the power of the Lord High Constables of England, and the splendour of the once mighty De Veres.

GREAT DUNMOW, the capital of the district which gives name to the Hundred, is a pleasant and improving town, with good houses and shops, intermingled occasionally with buildings which give to it the sign and seasoning of antiquity. About the centre of the place, mingled with the houses, stands the town-hall, quaint in style, but in good repair, having been thoroughly restored in late years; and opposite to it formerly stood the ancient market cross, bearing upon it the following inscription—"Willeame Stward, bayliffe, 1578. Wyllame Swetinge, 1578. Thomas Swetinge, carpenter.—Repaired and painted by Smeeth Raynor, bailiff, Anno 1761." Situated on a high gravelly eminence, healthy and picturesque, and with fine meadows and fertile arable lands about it, "little inferior," we are told, "to any in the county," and watered by the Chelmer, Dunmow is just such a spot as would be likely to be occupied in the early period of our history; and if not a settled station, it was a halting place of the Romans, lying, as it did, directly upon the military way which led from Colchester to Bishop Stortford, and so on to St. Albans. Some antiquarians have even made it the site of Cæsaromagus—a position which cannot be sustained without a violent wrenching of figures and straining of facts. The footsteps of the imperial rulers, however, are clearly to be traced in the neighbourhood by remnants of the embankment of their great road, which in the last century were to be found in the parish; by urns which the pickaxe has brought to light at Merks Hill; and by coins of Tiberias, Victorinus, Trajan, Antoninus, and others, which have been turned up near the town and Easton park. After the conquest the chief manors are found held by Hamo Dapifer, Geoffrey De Mandeville,

and a member of the great family of Clare; but South Hall was given in 1389 to the priory of Little Dunmow, and now belongs to the Drapers' Company. The parish is in the duchy of Lancaster, from the honours of Gloucester and Clare, of which it formed a part, being united with it. The manor of Great Dunmow, now belonging to Lord Maynard, was held by Catharine of Arragon as part of her dower, having been given her by Henry VIII., in 1509; and the park, which formerly surrounded the old mansion, has been brought into cultivation. Newton Hall, the old ancestral mansion of the Hennikers, situate at Church-end, a suburban district, where a great part of the old town of Dunmow formerly stood, was for years left to dreary dilapidation and decay in the care of a solitary retainer; but it has been pulled down by Sir Brydges Powell Henniker, and a house, partaking of the character of a shooting box, has been erected on the site. Bigods is the property of Lady Fitzgerald; and the other ancient manors have been cut up into smaller holdings.

Dunmow was incorporated by royal charter in the second and third years of the reign of Philip and Mary; and though the corporation may be said to have died long ago, through the neglect and indifference of the inhabitants, the ghost of it still haunts the vill, and may be seen in anything but a grim and ghost-like shape, hovering round a convivial table about Michaelmas tide. The fact seems to be, that originally it was an incorporation of the inhabitants, who were to elect yearly a bailiff, and such municipal officers as were "necessary for the government of the vill;" but they were insensible to the value of the power thus entrusted to them, forbore to take any part in the matter, and the burgesses and bailiffs have kept up the semblance of life by electing themselves. The title of the corporation was, "The Bailiffs and Burgesses of the Borough of Great Dunmow," and the charter, which was confirmed by Queen Elizabeth in the thirty-ninth year of her reign, provided—

"That they and their successors, or the greater number of them, from thenceforth at all future times, yearly, on Tuesday next after the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, in our borough of Great Dunmow aforesaid, shall and may freely and lawfully elect and nominate one of the same burgesses, the most discreet and sufficient bailiff, and into the office of bailiff of the said borough; which said burgess, so elected, shall be in the same office for one whole year thence next following, and shall bear, exercise, and execute the office of bailiff of the said borough in and by all things for the said time, if he shall so long live, and not be removed from the said office; and if within the said year the said burgess so elected into the office of bailiff shall die, or be any ways removed from the said office, then they shall and may, within six days after his decease, freely elect and nominate another of the same burgesses in the place of him so dying or removed, for the remainder of

ance, which kings and the nobles of the land assisted in building and beautifying.

There are at Parsonage Down alms-houses for twelve poor people; the school-house near the King's Head belongs to the parish; and the proceeds of the church house are received by the parish clerk. Several houses and patches of land were left in early times for the reparation of the church and charitable purposes, and they appear to have been invested in trust since the time of Richard II. They comprise—Church Mead, 1A.; Mill Pasture, 2A. 1R. 32P.; a cottage in Church-street; a cottage and three roods of land near Sluts Green; and Crane's farm, of 12A. 3R. 22P.; the whole, producing about £40 a-year, was formerly applied to the support of a school. A farm near Cutler's Green, Thaxted, comprising 31A. 36P., was purchased in 1652 with £230, left to the poor by different parties, and it now produces £30 a-year.

**LITTLE DUNMOW PRIORY—THE FLITCH OF BACON.**—Travelling two miles to the eastward, we reach Little Dunmow, a small parish with scattered houses, nowhere rising to the dignity of a village. It possesses, however, most historical interest as the site of the ancient Priory, with its custom of the bacon for those who have passed a year of matrimonial life without bickering or broil, which for ages has been a household joke at social hearths throughout the kingdom. The parish, in the time of the Conqueror, came into the hands of Ralph Baynard, who shared so largely of the Saxon spoil in the county. One of his descendants took part against Henry I., who seized the estate, and it was granted to Richard Fitz-Giselbert, whose son Robert was the founder of the noble family of Fitzwalter, in which the parish continued for ten generations.

The Priory, which stood on a pleasant rising ground, was founded in 1104 by the Lady Juga, sister of Ralph Baynard, and the church is stated to have been consecrated by Maurice, then Bishop of London. It was not very largely endowed in the first instance, but it went on accumulating bequests and benefactions under the fostering wing of the Fitzwalters, till in the height of its prosperity it possessed lands, manors, tithes, rectories, and vicarages to a considerable amount in three or four counties. Its property in this county lay in Great Saling, Burnham, Henham, Finchingfield, the Nortons, Paglesham, and Barnston; and it had possessions in Hertfordshire and Suffolk. Its revenues at the suppression amounted to £178. 2s. 4d., forming at that day a goodly income for a prior and eleven Augustine canons, which was the number of monks it maintained. The buildings have long since been razed. The walks and grounds,

where the friars paced to and fro muttering their offices, are now corn fields. That quiet row of cottages, formerly a farmhouse, representing the dignity of the Priory manor, stands on the site of the buildings within which the guest was welcomed and the feast was spread on saint's day and high festival. Yonder a little to the north, is the Grange of the good fathers, now occupied by Mr. Blyth. The church which, as now, was the place of parochial worship in monastic days, is the only relic which time and indifference to the monuments of the past have spared, and even this has dwindled down to the east end of the choir and the north aisle. The edifice is described as having been in its completeness a stately building. The architecture was of the most elaborate style; and the roof was supported by rows of pillars of the Tuscan order. Even in this remnant we may "trace the lines where beauty lingers," and form a conception of the splendour of the whole. The modern trowel has shaped the relic after its own plain fashion, and adapted it to the humble worship of the villagers; but the works of the past stand boldly out, refreshing to the eye which has a relish for the beautiful. The stone of the fine gothic windows is there, though blocked up and built into the wall. The massive columns still stand. We can trace the elegantly carved oak foliage upon the capitals. We can admire the graceful arch, partially hidden behind barbarous mortar, or still more barbarously cut in twain. The earth, too, around, teems with the noble and the renowned of old. Beneath that arch in the wall, and under that tomb of a chest-like form, has slumbered for more than seven hundred years the Lady Juga, the fair foundress of the Priory. This battered and broken figure, once finely wrought in alabaster, is that of Matilda, the heroine of the romantic story already recorded, whose beauty so inflamed the heart of King John that he punished her unrelenting virtue with poison. Other effigies lie around, rescued from the heaps of bricks and rubbish on which a visitor in the last century found them heedlessly thrown, and now arranged in decent posture, though some with limbs amputated by long neglect or the hands of the careless workmen, and all wretchedly mutilated. It is difficult to distinguish them. This is probably the tomb of the first Fitzwalter, for Dugdale tells us "he died in 1198, and was buried, with one of his wives, in the choir of Dunmow, under a tomb of marble." The same writer adds—"Robert the second, his son, lies buried before the high altar in the Priory of Dunmow; he died in 1284. \* \* \* Walter Lord Fitzwalter, last male of this house, was buried in this church, under an arch in the wall,

near the body of his mother ; he died in 1432." The other inscriptions are of more modern date, to the Wyldes and the Halletts,—the family of the latter being still lords of the Priory manor,—and of one of the former a stone records that as the heir of Sir William Wyld he was hurried from the destroying plague of London in 1665, and found death in this quiet corner.

The scene around this last morsel of the monastery church presents little to remind us of the ancient character of the spot. That series of green mounds which we see a little to the south-west, was mistaken by a staid historian for the mouldering foundations of the Priory, but they are clearly the artificial embankments of the fish-ponds, in which carp and tench flourished and fattened till they were required for the table of the monks on the meatless Fridays, and the long fasts of Lent. The shapes of the larger and the lesser stews can be distinctly traced ; and on the other side of yonder hedge-row still trickles the little stream which filled and fed them. The Priory appears to have stood in the field to the south, abutting up to the remnant of the church, where its hard and long extending foundations have baffled the spade of the enterprising drainer ; and as we turned to look for the Prior's rich hall of audience and the gloomy cell of the humble brother—for

The pillar "carved and quaint,  
And mouldering in his niche the saint,"

we found their sites covered with ripening corn, waving in the sunny smile of summer, and heard the click of the mower, who, without troubling himself as to the past occupants, was whetting his scythe to gather in the crop.

We have no account of the origin of the custom by which the bride and bridegroom who have passed the early period of wedded life, undisturbed by the light clouds and refreshing breezes which some believe give zest and healthful variety to matrimonial life, are entitled to a flitch of bacon. All the records that remain of it are in connexion with the priory. The monks, however, it is concluded, were not the originators of it, though we know they dearly loved anything like a joke that would break the dull monotony of monastic life, and could enjoy a merry chuckle under their cowls. It is believed to have been rather a custom or tenure by which the manor was held, perhaps in Saxon times, before the monastery was built ; or it was laid down by some benefactor of the priory, as a condition on which lands should be held by the monks,—possibly it was imposed by some grim old bachelor, who imagined it would stand unclaimed, a lasting reproach to



married life. That it is to be classed amongst the whimsical tenures of the county, and is traceable to some grant, is proved by the most ancient records of the claims made, which set forth that the oath was taken "according to the form of the charter," sometimes "according to the form of the gift." This is confirmed by the facts connected with a similar custom at Wichnour, in Staffordshire, where we learn the lord was to keep the bacon hanging in the hall at all times of the year, save in Lent, and on compliance with this, he was to be exempted from half of the payments for certain purposes which others made to the crown. Dugdale, indeed, in his *Monasticon*, attributes it to a mere whim or custom, but he still leaves the matter in mystery; and the evidence we have quoted is decidedly against him. He says—"Robert Fitzwalter, who lived long beloved by King Henry, the son of King John, (as also of all the realm) betook himself in his latter days to prayer and deeds of charity, and great and bountiful alms to the poor, kept great hospitality, and re-edified the decayed priory of Dunmow, which one Juga, a most devote and religious woman, had builded. In which priory arose a custom, begun and instituted either by him or some of his ancestors, which is verified by the common saying or proverb, that he which repents him not of his marriage, either sleeping or waking, in a year and a day, may lawfully go to Dunmow, and fetch a gammon of bacon." The first record we have of the claiming of the bacon is in 1445. It is found in the chartulary of the priory, amongst the Cottonian manuscripts in the British Museum, and is as follows:—

"Memorandum—That one Richard Wright, of Badbource, near the city of Norwich, in the county of Norfolk, yeoman, came and required the Bacon of Dunmow, on the 27th day of April, in the 23rd year of the reign of King Henry VI., and according to the form of the charter, was sworn before John Cannon, prior of this place, and the convent, and many other neighbours, and there was delivered to him the said Richard, one fitch of bacon."

The next was twenty-three years after—viz. in 1468:—

"Memorandum—That one Stephen Samuel, of Little Easton, in the county of Essex, husbandman, came to the Priory of Dunmow, on our Lady-day in Lent, in the seventh year of King Edward IV., and required a gammon of bacon, and was sworn before Roger Bulcott, then prior, and the convent of this place, as also before a multitude of other neighbours, and there was delivered to him a gammon of bacon."

The last of these records is just prior to the Reformation:—

"Memorandum—That in the year of our Lord 1510, Thomas Le Fuller, of Coggeshall, in the county of Essex, came to the Priory of Dunmow, and on the 8th of September, being Sunday, in the second year of King Henry VIII., he was, according to the form of the charter, sworn before John Tils, the prior of the house and convent, as also before a multitude of neighbours, and there was delivered unto him, the said Thomas, a gammon of bacon."

In neither of these records, it will be observed, is any mention made of the lady. She does not seem to have been sworn. From all that appears to the contrary she was left at liberty to work her whims and indulge her temper; and the bacon was a reward for the patience of enduring husbands. It appears from the language of one historian—and he has not been gainsayed—that the wife was not present. After describing the administration of the oath, he says—"Then the pilgrim was taken on men's shoulders, and carried first about the Priory churchyard, and after that through the town, with all the friars, brethren, and townsfolk, with shouts and acclamations, with his bacon borne before him, and sent home in the same manner." This [view, too, is further strengthened by the fact that at Wichnour the bacon was claimable by those who, in Roman Catholic phrase, were "married to the church"—that is, by any monk, priest, or other religious person, after a year and a day of his profession. In modern times, however, the wife has been subjected to the ordeal, to increase the difficulty; just as the lord of the Priory is asserted to have made the oath more stringent in order to save his bacon. After the suppression of the religious houses, the duty in connexion with the custom fell upon the court baron and the homage; and the following record from the rolls is given by Morant—

"At a Court Baron of Sir Thomas May, Knt., holden the 7th of June, 1701, before Thomas Wheeler, gent., steward, the homage being five fair ladies, spinsters; namely Elizabeth Beaumont, Henrietta Beaumont, Annabella Beaumont, Jane Beaumont, and Mary Wheeler—they found, that John Reynolds, of Hatfield Brodoke, gent., and Anne his wife, and William Parsley, of Much Easton, butcher, and Jane his wife, by means of their quiet and peaceable, tender and loving cohabitation for the space of three years last past, and upwards, were fit and qualified persons to be admitted by the court to receive the ancient and accustomed oath, whereby to entitle themselves to have the bacon of Dunmow delivered unto them according to custom of the manor. Accordingly, having taken the oath, kneeling on the two great stones near the church door, the bacon was delivered to each couple."

The last legitimate instance of presentation was in 1751, on which occasion there were 5,000 persons present, and vehicles lined the road for two miles, from Great Dunmow to the Priory church. Hogarth was present, and has pictured the scene in one of his immortal prints. The following is the official record of the proceedings—

"The Manor of Dunmow, late the Priory, in Essex.—The special Court Baron of Mary Hallett, widow, lady of the said manor, there held for the said manor, on Thursday, the twentieth day of June, in the five and twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Second, by the grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King Defender of the Faith, and in the year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty and One, before George Comyns, Esquire, steward of the said manor,

## Homage,

William Townsend, gent.  
 Mary Cater, spinster  
 John Strutt the yor., gent.  
 Martha Wickford, spinster  
 James Raymond the yor., gent.  
 Elizabeth Smith, spinster

THOMAS  
 22

Daniel Heckford, gent.  
 Catherine Brett, spinster  
 Robert Mapletoft, gent.  
 Eliza Haslefoot, spinster  
 Richard Birch, gent.  
 Sarah Mapletoft, spinster

Be it remembered that at this court, it is found and presented by the homage aforesaid, that Thomas Shakeshaft, of Weathersfield, in the county of Essex, weaver, and Ann, his wife, have been married for the space of seven years last past and upwards. And it is likewise found, presented, and adjudged by the homage aforesaid, that the said Thomas Shakeshaft, and Ann his wife, by means of their quiet, peaceable, tender, and loving cohabitation for the space of time aforesaid, as appears to the said homage, are fit and qualified persons to be admitted by the court to receive the ancient and accustomed oath, whereby to entitle themselves to have the bacon of Dunmow delivered unto them according to the custom of this manor. Whereupon, at this court in full and open court, came the said Thomas Shakeshaft, and Ann his wife, in their own proper persons, and humbly prayed they might be admitted to take the oath aforesaid. Whereupon the said steward, with the jury, suitors, and other officers of the court, proceeded with the usual solemnity to the ancient and accustomed place for the administration of the oath, and receiving the bacon aforesaid, (that is to say) to the two great stones lying near the church door, within the said manor, where the said Thomas Shakeshaft and Ann his wife, kneeling down on the said two stones, the said steward did administer unto them the accustomed oath, in the words or to the effect following (that is to say)—

“ You shall swear by custom of confession,  
 That you ne’er made nuptial transgression ;  
 Nor since you were married man and wife,  
 By household brawls, or contentious strife,  
 Or otherwise, in bed or at board,  
 Offended each other, in deed or in word  
 Or since the parish clerk said Amen,  
 Wished yourselves unmarried again ;  
 Or in a twelve-month and a day,  
 Repented not in thought any way ;  
 But continued true in thought and desire,  
 As when you joined hands in holy quire.  
 If to these conditions, without all fear,  
 Of your own accord you will freely swear,  
 A whole gammon of bacon you shall receive,  
 And bear it hence with love and good leave,  
 For this is our custom at Dunmow well-known ;  
 Though the pleasure be our’s, the bacon’s your own.”

“ The two great stones at the church door” were ingeniously cut and jagged, so as to present a series of uneasy points to the knees of the pilgrims ; and the malicious monks were in the habit of extending the ceremony with long-drawn prayers, religious singing, and provoking chants, much to the earthly discomfort of the tried and tortured claimants.

Nine years ago a claim for the bacon was made by Mr. and Mrs. Hurrell, of Felstead ; but the lord of the manor repudiated his responsibility. The porcine dainty, however, was presented to them by the people of Great Dunmow, at a fête in Easton

Park. Aided by the wand of the romancist, an attempt has since been made to raise the ghost of the custom in that town. Mr. and Mrs. Barlow, of Ongar, and M. de Chatelain and his wife, received the fitch from Mr. Harrison Ainsworth in 1855 and in 1857; it was given to Mr. and Mrs. Hawkins, of the Regent's Park, and Mr. and Mrs. Heard, of Staffordshire, in the same way; but the ceremony was only a theatrical parade of dry bones. The ancient spirit of the thing was not there—so impossible is it for society to go backward, or to clothe with flesh the skeleton of an obsolete habit or dead custom, which modern feeling and refinement have long entombed.

PLESHEY CASTLE AND COLLEGE.—Turning from the old priory lands, and proceeding by the road to Chelmsford along the south-western verge of the hundred, we pass through the small parish of Barnston,\* with its church, part of which is believed to have been raised by Saxon hands, crowning the high ground; and then, diverging about two miles to the right, we find, in the midst of a thinly peopled though fertile tract of land, the village of Pleshey, described in the last century as “a set of miserable houses, or rather huts,” and not even yet much improved. It was once a town of considerable importance, the site of a flourishing college, and the seat of the Lord High Constables of England. The green mounds of the old castle, however, are all the relics that remain of its former greatness. These skirt the road on the left, about the centre of the village, partly overgrown with brushwood and shaded with trees, which almost conceal the baronial relic from the sight. Entering through a small clap-gate, we descend into the castle yard, a level space of about two acres, surrounded by broad earthen ramparts, which formed a great part, if not the whole, of its defensive walls; and protected as they are by a deep broad moat without, must have been formidable in ancient warfare. Within this space were the principal buildings of the castle; but the keep, which stood on the huge artificial mount on the east side, as the place of greatest security and strength, was isolated by another moat, and reached by a lofty brick bridge, of one arch. This bridge, which is contracted in a singular manner towards the foundation, still remains, carrying over the curious visitor as safely as it did the Norman sentinel, and, rising high in air above the defensive ditch, and partially woven over with ivy, it

\* The church contains the tomb of Dr. Scott, almoner to Queen Elizabeth and King James.—The charities of Barnston consist of 17A. of land, purchased with £160, left by Richard Scott, in 1625; the Maiden Croft, 4A., purchased with benefaction money in 1645; rent-charges of £2 given by Wm. Collard, in 1657; and £1 by Nicholas Collard, in 1672, out of Shoulder Hall. These are distributed to the poor.

presents from the low ground a picturesque object in the scene. The mount is, at the summit, 45 paces long by 25 broad. Not long since foundations and angles of spacious rooms were to be traced along the approaches, but these are now covered with the mould and the moss ; and, save the solitary arch over which we have just passed, not a brick or a stone of all the ancient buildings remains in sight. Yet here rose the high towers, and yonder stood the rooms of state, the barrack, and the banquet-hall. The spot has been the scene of deeds that history will not allow to be forgotten. Within this circle sat, as already recorded, Richard II., as he supped with the Duke of Gloucester, and with fair words upon his lip, and the treacherous smile of friendly confidence in his face, decoyed his uncle to the grasp of the murderer. About the spot where yon cattle are quietly grazing—the centre of the castle yard—perished the Earl of Exeter, an offering by the lynch-law of those days to appease the spirit of the murdered Gloucester. Here was heard the nuptial hymn, and here was spread the gorgeous feast, on the 12th of January, 1180, when Wm. de Mandeville solemnized his marriage with the heiress of the Earl of Albemarle, “at his castle at Plaizet,” and the nobles of the land gathered round, and the retainers flocked in, to do him honour. Here, too, died Humphrey de Bohun, in 1298 ; and imagination calls up the monks chanting the funeral dirge, as the portcullis rose, the drawbridge fell across the moat, and the long funeral procession issued from the castle gates. These historical memories which haunt the scene, contrast strangely with the gay summer pic-nic parties which now often spread their feast on the green turf that has overgrown the site where these things were enacted, or scramble up the old mount to enjoy the rural prospect, and chat of the village tradition which used to tell of a huge iron chest filled with rich treasure fixed by the power of magic in the moat below.

Pleshey was a position thought worthy of occupation in the earliest times. It was the site of either a military station or an important villa of the Romans, whose entrenchments may still be faintly traced on the west, north, and east sides, encompassing the whole of the present village ; and coffins, and a funeral urn filled with burnt bones, have been found in the vicinity. History, however, is silent as to the hands by which the castle was raised. The first mention we find of it is in the reign of King Stephen, when it was the property of Geoffery de Mandeville, having, it is conjectured, been given to him by the crown when he was created Earl of Essex. He soon forfeited it, together with his chief castle of Walden, by his

adherence to the Empress Maud; but it came back to the family, and continued there, and in the line of the de Bohuns by marriage, till 1416. It then descended to two heiresses, Eleanor, who married Thomas of Woodstock, sixth son of Edward III., afterwards Duke of Gloucester, and Mary, who became the queen of Henry IV. During all this period the castle was the residence of the High Constables of England—important officers of state in those days, who had “cognizance of contracts touching deeds of arms, and of war out of the realm, and also of things that touch war within this realm, which could not be determined nor discussed by the common law, with other usages and customs to the same matters pertaining.” To the castle were attached two parks, called the Great and Little Parks, the former of which included part of the lands now belonging to Waltham Bury; and mention is made of these as late as 1566. The place is described as having been “rendered very pleasing by the fine buildings, fortifications, and parks with which it was adorned.” It even appears to have been a town invested with civic dignity, as, in a record relating to the court baron, it is stated that “The Mayor of Pleshey for the time being is to collect and gather all the quit-rents, fines, and amerciaments of courts, without any consideration allowed him for his pains.”

The COLLEGE, which covered six acres of land, and stood on the south side of the present church, was founded by the Duke of Gloucester in 1393, for nine chaplains, one of whom was to be warden or master, two clerks, and two choristers. He endowed it with land in the parish, the manor of Barnston, and other property in Hertfordshire and Kent. Subsequently it was enriched with further benefactions. The Duke of Buckingham, who was killed at the battle of Northampton in 1460, was buried here, with his wife and three sons—one of whom, the Earl of Wiltshire, gave 100 marks for three priests and six poor men to pray for him and the souls of his ancestors, for which purpose he built a chapel on the north side of the church, for a mass of Our Lady daily. Sir Henry Stafford, who married the mother of Henry VII., also chose this for his resting-place, and willed land for a priest to sing for his soul in the college for ever. Through these, and other like gifts and bequests, the revenues of the college at the suppression amounted to £143. 12s. 7d.

From the death of the Duke of Gloucester, it seems that Pleshey began to decay. The castle, park, and manor fell to the crown in the time of Henry V., and became part of the duchy of Lancaster. The office of High Constable of England was



abolished in 1521. The suppression of the college soon after followed, and completed the ruin. The property and buildings of the ecclesiastical institution having been granted by Henry VIII. to Sir John Gate, he, with ruffian hand, pulled down the noble chancel of the church, to make money of the materials, heedless of the ashes of the noble dead who reposed within its walls. The demolition of the other college buildings was completed about 1630, when the materials of this structure, and what could be gleaned from the ruins of the castle, were used by the family of the Clerks, to build Pleshey Lodge, leaving not a wreck of either behind. The manor and parks also were conferred by Edward VI. on Sir John Gate, but when he perished in the cause of Lady Jane Grey, they reverted to the crown. The Great Park afterwards passed to Lord Rich; the Little Park to Sir Robert Clerk, who had purchased the site of the College. In 1720 they were all sold to Sir William Joliffe, who at his death in 1750 left them to his nephew, Samuel Tufnell, Esq.; and, with other estates in Pleshey, they now belong to John Joliffe Tufnell, Esq., of Langley's.

The church of Pleshey originally stood on the side of the road opposite to the existing edifice, beyond the present village inn; but when the college was built, the king and the bishop granted their royal license to transfer to it the parochial place of worship. The collegiate church—a large and noble structure, built in the cathedral style, in the form of a cross, with the tower in the middle—was from thenceforth the only church of the inhabitants. When, therefore, the sacrilegious hand of Sir John Gate destroyed the chancel and transepts, and in its greed menaced the nave and tower, the parishioners became alarmed at the prospect of being left without a place of public worship, and, poor as they had become, they came forward, and, by means of a subscription, ransomed the body of the sacred edifice, the steeple and the bells, from his grasp. Their descendants, however, lacked either the means or the taste necessary to preserve the part of the structure thus secured. Havoc was let loose within it, and arch and column were battered down, and devoted to the vilest uses. Weever, writing of the state of things in his time, says:—

“The upper part of this collegiate church within these few yeares was taken downe; and as I was told in the towne, the parishioners (being either vnable or unwilling to repaire the decays) carried away the materials which were employed to other uses. This part of the church was adorned and beautified with diuers rich funerall monuments, which were hammered a peece, bestowed and diuided according to the discretion of the inhabitants. Vpon one of the parts of a dismembered monument, carelessly cast here and there in the body of the church, I found these words:—‘Here lyeth *John Holland*, Erle of Exeter, Erle of Huntington, and Chamberlayne of England, who dyed \* \* \* \*’”



This John was half brother to Richard II., and Duke of Exeter, from which dignitie he was deposed, by act of parliament, in the first yeare of King Henry IV., whose sister he had married; and on the third day after the Epiphanie, 1399 (Henry IV), he was beheaded in the base court of the castle of Pleshie (now quite ruined), that he might seeme to haue been iustly punished, by way of satisfaction, for the Duke of Gloucester, of whose death he was thought to be the principall procurer."

At the beginning of the last century the church was a ruin; but through the liberality and exertions of Bishop Compton the rubbish was cleared away, and a small brick building was erected. Samuel Tufnell, Esq., added a chancel, and repaired the tower, and the sacred edifice is now more interesting from the historical associations which belong to the spot, and the curious mingling of the old and the new, than for the elegance of its outward appearance. The chancel contains a monument to Sir Wm. Joliffe, and the vault of the Tufnell family, but no inscription later than the last century.

There are four acres of church land in the parish, but there is no charitable endowment for the poor.

THE EASTERES.—High Easter we may enter by stepping across the boundary line of Pleshey, and the other lies in yonder pleasant vale below, a little away to the north-west, and near the source of the Can. They appear to have been part of the demesne lands of Pleshey, and to have followed in early times the fortunes of the castle and the college, as did also the little parish of Mashbury beyond, which runs up to within five miles of Chelmsford. In fact the three first formed one parish. The manors and old manor-houses, some of which are still moated round, have passed through various families by grant, forfeiture, or purchase since the Mandevilles and the de Bohuns were the lords. Eustace gave Good Easter to the collegiate church of St. Martin's-le-Grand, and four of the Prebendaries had endowments and residences in the parish; but in 1492 Henry VII. transferred the whole to Westminster Abbey; and at the suppression, it passed to Lord Rich and his heirs. Lord Rayleigh, and J. R. S. Phillips, Esq., are now the principal owners. The church is chiefly remarkable for a series of stone arches cut in the walls of the chancel, which appear to have been saintly shrines or altars, or cells for devotees. High Easter, of which J. J. Tufnell, Esq. is the chief lord, was partly in the Gate family, till Sir John perished on the block, and the village church still retains memorials of his name. The carved timbers of the roof contain traces of sculptured puns, in the shape of emblematical gates; and on a plate of brass, in the north wall of the chancel, which some rude hand has since torn away, there was formerly the following inscription:—

"Pray for the soul, all ye that live in light,  
Of Sir Jeffry Gate, the curtesse knight,  
Whose wife is buried here; by God's might  
He bought the manor of Garnets by right.  
Of Coppedo Gentilman lyon behight,  
Of Hiest' witness his wyff and executor,  
This yere and day come on his dely Howers,  
XXII. day of January, 1456."

On a stone in the ground beneath, appeared on a plate of brass this record, now greatly defaced, and only here and there legible—

"Here lyeth dame Agnes Gate, wife of Syr Geffrey Gate, knt., the which Syr Geffrey Gate was six yere captayn of the Isle of Wight, And after that marshal of Caleis; there kept with the Pikards worshippful warris, & eo., intended as a good knight to please the kyng in the pties of Nomandi with all his might. The which Agnes dyed the IX of Dec., 1480, whose soule Jhu have mercy."

Good Easter has two and a half acres of church land in the parish, and six acres in Writtle and Roxwell; 1s. 4d. out of Wares Farm, and 10d. out of Gate-house farm; a rent-charge of 10s., left by Mr. Monk, is applied to the Infant School; till 1805, the poor had two bushels of wheat, and two bushels of barley, with a rent of 3s. 10d. out of Bailey's farm. The only charity in High Easter is 10s. left by Mr. Monk, out of Nightingales field, and given to poor widows.

**THE ROTHINGS.**—The Roothings, or the Roinges, as it was anciently called, is a district lying beyond the Easters, and abutting upon Ongar Hundred, in which, indeed, Abbots and Beauchamp are included at one point, and on Harlow in another. It is purely agricultural, comprising 11,788 acres, chiefly of a thin clay soil, which, however, produces heavy crops of wheat, especially rivett, and fine barley. It is thinly peopled, having in the eight parishes, and the hamlet of Morrell, which is incorporated with White Roothing, a population of only 2,235, or, including women and children, one person to every five acres. The number of houses, in 1851, was 481; but judging from the neat cottages we have seen springing up by the road side in some of the parishes, the dwellings of the poor have been since then considerably increased. Up to about 50 years ago the district was to a certain extent cut off from the rest of the county by its bridgeless brooks and the badness of its roads. A pilgrimage to the Roothings was then looked upon as rather an arduous adventure by the dwellers in the towns; and we find the historian consoling the inhabitants with the old distich—

"That country is best for the bider,  
That is most cumbersome to the rider."

All this, however, has now been changed. The roads through the heart of the district are as good as any under the protecting

care of turnpike trusts. The farmers are amongst the most intelligent and well to do; and at the annual gathering of the Labourers' Friend Society, the visitor will see as fine a peasantry and as gay a party as anywhere in the county. The former isolated and inaccessible character of the Roothings, however, has left it without any remains of ancient grandeur. There is no baronial hall to attract the attention—no ruin to tempt the antiquarian. Noble families of historical fame and rich ecclesiastical institutions have been connected with the district; but neither castle nor cloister appears to have been raised within the boundary. High and Aythorp Roothing belonged, under the Saxon and Danish dynasties, to the monastery of Ely, having been given to it by Leofwin, a noble, in atonement for the murder of his mother. But as the monks had in mercy sheltered some who would not submit to the foreign intruder, the Conqueror wrested the property from them and gave it to William de Warren, through whose family it passed to the Plantagenets, then to the Earls of Arundel, who in the troubles and treasons of the time twice forfeited it, as two of its members perished on the block; and lastly it came by sale, in 1554, through a sister of Queen Anne Boleyn, to Sir Thos. Jocelyn, the ancestor of the Earls of Roden, the present lords—New-hall, then a large mansion, with its court and its chapel, being two centuries ago the residence of a branch of that family. The manor of Friar's-grange, in Aythorp, belonged to Tilty Abbey. White Roothing Bury was appropriated by the Conqueror to himself, and was long held of the crown by the service of keeping lanar falcons or hawks, for heron-hawking, and a greyhound trained to make a heron rise, from Michaelmas to the Purification, for the King's use. The manor of Marks, in Margaret Roothing, was formerly an independent chapelry, and had a chapel where the farm buildings stand. Part of its tithes, as already stated, are paid to Stondon Massey, and it is believed they were given by some early owner of the estate, as before the year 1200 any person might devote his tithes to what church he pleased. The estate was settled by the Bishop of Durham, in 1403, on University College, Oxford, which still owns it. The De Veres were the ancient lords of Garnets or Garnish Hall. Sir James Berners, the proprietor of Berners Hall, was beheaded, as one of the evil councillors of Richard II., when the estate was confiscated, and purchased for Thomas of Woodstock. Juliana Berners, one of the fast women of the day, the daughter of Sir James, was born here. Though a nun, and the Prioress of Sopewell, she was fond of hawking and the hunting field, and she was celebrated as a writer upon all the popular sports of the day.

The manor of Abbess Hall belonged to the Abbess of Barking till the suppression. Rockwood Hall was a fine old mansion with a spacious park, which was secured by the Norman De Mandeville. But all these properties have undergone various changes ere they have come into the hands of their modern lords, among whom are S. Bocket Bocket, Esq. ; Lord Dacre ; the Earl of Roden ; T. W. Bramston, Esq., M.P., who owns the chief manor of Abbots and Beauchamp ; and the Abdy and other families. The old manor-houses are now exclusively occupied by the cultivators of the soil. The clergy and the farmers are in fact the aristocracy of the district ; and they appear to well discharge the responsibilities which thus devolve on them in regard to property and the poor.

The churches of the Roothings, as might have been anticipated from the formerly secluded character of the district, possess little of architectural grandeur, or antiquarian reliquary. Yet they have about them a certain degree of interest, as the humble houses in which from remote ages the agricultural poor have worshipped ; and in some of their yards, amongst the green swelling mounds which mark where the "forefathers of the hamlet sleep," are still to be found the primitive wooden memorial, with death's head and the cross-bones rudely carved thereon, but the name and "uncouth rhyme" which distinguished the graves of some who were a little more remarkable or wealthy than their fellows long since obliterated. The sacred structure of most pretension is that of White Roothing, which is a good building, and with its embattled tower, which contains five bells, and its tall spire, is seen from a considerable distance, a pleasing object in the rural landscape. The churches of Aythorp, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, of Leaden, of Abbots, dedicated to St. Edmund, of Beauchamp, sacred to St. Botolph, and of St. Margaret, are all small but evidently ancient structures, and the latter has at the western door a fine arch, said to be Saxon, with wreathed pillars, which it is well worth the while of the passing traveller, ere he descends the hill on which it stands, to turn aside and inspect. Morrell, not being a parish of itself, had no church, but there was formerly belonging to it a little antique chapel, which was worthy a better fate than that of being used as a pigeon-house, to which base purpose it was for a time applied, but is now demolished. As few of the great and mighty of the land fixed their dwellings in the district, they have not adorned it with their "storied urns" when dead ; and there are only two funeral monuments calling for note in this cluster of eight churches. One is in High Roothing, on a member of the Jocelyn family. On a plate of

brass on a plain stone in the chancel is the following inscription,—the satiric hit as to literary plagiarism is supposed to be aimed at the *Antiquitates Britannicæ* of Archbishop Parker, the inhabitant of the tomb being secretary to that prelate:—

“John Jocelyn esquire interred here doth lie,  
 Sir Thomas Jocelyn's third son, of worthy memory.  
 Thrice noble was this gentleman by birth, by learning great,  
 By single chaste and Godly life he wan in heaven a scate,  
 He the year one thousand and five hundred twenty-nine was borne  
 Not twenty years old him Cambridge did with two degrees adorn;  
 King's College him a fellow chose in anno forty-nine,  
 In learning tryde whereto he did his mind alwaies incline.  
 But others took the praise and fame of his deserving witt,  
 And his inventions as their owne to printing did committ,  
 One thousand six hundred and three, it grieves all to remember,  
 He left this life (Poors daily Friend) the twenty-eighth December.”

The church of Abbots contains several monuments to members of the Capel family, one of which, of the date of 1627, is to Sir Gamaliel Capel and his wife, who are represented on a marble tomb in the chancel, with the effigies of their nine children below them, all in a posture of devotion; and between their heads is the following inscription:—

“Loe Honoures Embleme, Vertues Darling, Learninges Favorite,  
 Noble by Birth, by Life a Sainte, by Death a Blissfulle Wighte.  
 His Name importeth Godes Rewarde, then for his last Farewell,  
 Let this suffice; he livd and dyd a true Gamaliel.”

Another of the monuments is “to the pretious memory” of his daughter, the Lady Mildred Luckyn, of Little Waltham.

There are few charitable endowments in the district. Margaret Roothing has £14 a year from D'Oyley's charity for schooling poor children of the vicinity, and 30s. for distribution in bread; Leaden has £5 out of the Hall Farm, for a school mistress to teach poor children; the parish clerk of Abbots has 40s out of Fowkeners, left in 1678, by Nicholas Burton; the poor of High Roothing have 6s. 8d. out of Rainbow field in Attridge farm, left by James Choppin in 1616, who also bequeathed 13s. 4d. out of a cottage, which has since been purchased by benefactions, and is occupied by paupers. George and John Jocelyn gave six milch kine for ever, the profit of two to be applied to the repair of the church, and the other four for an obit for themselves and the souls of their ancestors, but this has been discontinued; a school-house endowed by Sir Strange Jocelyn and his brother Edward in the early part of the last century was seized and sold by the lord of the manor in 1814 for want of title; and all trace of a house said to have been given to the poor by Henry Drury in 1614 has vanished.

THE WILLINGALES.—Yonder to the southward is the little

parish of Shellow Bowels, the property of T. W. Bramston, Esq.; and at the extremity of the Hundred towards Ongar, the Willingales crown the high ground which rises above the vale of the Roding, affording a fine prospect over the whole of the district. Willingale Doe, the larger of the two, is chiefly vested in the Bramston family, Warder's Hall, the principal manor, forming part of the estate of Skreens, and the Rev. J. Bramston is lord of Torrel's Hall, which gives name to a little hamlet. The chief manor of Willingale Spain, with most of the soil of the parish, is the property of S. Bocket, Esq., a descendant of Sir John Bocket, of Bocket Hall in Hertfordshire; and he resides at Spains Hall, about a mile from the village,—one of the fine manor-houses of another age, upon which have been engrafted the taste and elegances of the present. The peculiar feature of interest that will strike the visitor to these twin parishes is the circumstance of both the churches standing in the same yard, within a few rods of each other, so that the wanderer amongst the tombs in time of divine service may hear the voices of the two congregations of worshipers mingling with each other in holy rivalry. It is a singular circumstance—the only instance of the kind in the county; but parallels to it are to be found in Cambridgeshire and in Norfolk. Forty years ago, as we stood leaning over the church-yard gate, speculating on the cause of the curious arrangement, we enquired of a grey-haired parishioner who was passing, what account village tradition gave of the matter, “Why you see,” said he, “that a long while ago there were two ladies, sisters, who owned most of the property hereabouts, and they quarrelled about which should have a particular seat in the best pew in the church. The oldest would not give way, so the youngest built a church of her own, in which she could enjoy the seat of choice and dignity.” Whether the foundations of the second sacred edifice were laid in this fit of pride and passion we do not pretend to decide; but an air of probability is given to the legend by the fact that the two parishes formed only one in the time of the Conqueror. The subject, however, has fairly baffled historians, who content themselves with simply telling us that the two churches stand in the same church-yard, “the reason of which nothing remaining shows.” That of Willingale Spain is the smaller and evidently by far the older of the two. The marks of its antiquity are to be found in its small round headed loop-holes, its lancet windows, and its Norman doorways, the doors themselves being covered with iron work in various devices, spreading over the entire surface. The church belonged to the Priory of Blackmore, having been given



to it by William de Hispania "for the health of the souls of his father and mother, himself and his wife." It has a very elegant modern altar-piece given by William Bocket, Esq.; but the only noticeable monument to be found in the edifice is one of curious construction, about a foot in length, and eight or ten inches wide. It is made of wood in the shape of a book, one side being fastened to the south wall of the church, and the other moving on metal hinges. On the outside are the arms and quarterings of the Bewsies; and on opening it a sheet of parchment is seen emblazoned with shields affixed to the pillars of a Grecian arch, in the centre of which are the following lines—the eagles alluded to being part of the family arms—

"Those eagles brought Bewsies' antient bloode  
From France to Springfield and from thence to Spaine,  
Attend his offspring here, whose hopeful budd  
Death's frost has nipt, whom earthly fate have slaine,  
Six blossoms here lie shaken from the tree,  
Where eagles frequent are dead bodies bee."

A whimsical account of the coat of arms follows in wretched verse; and on escutcheons are inscribed records of different members of the family who were buried between 1620 and 1638. Several brasses, which were of about the same period, have been sacrilegiously torn from the stones and carried away. The church of Willingale Doe is a much larger and nobler structure, and a few years ago it was considerably enlarged and restored. It contains many interesting memorials of the Torrells and the Wisemans, but all of them have suffered greatly from heedless usage and the hand of the pilferer. On the floor of the nave is the figure of a warrior in a devotional attitude, clothed in armour, and the feet resting on a dog. The inscription is gone, but the armorial ensigns near the head show that it represented one of the family of the Torrells, who are frequently found mentioned in Domesday Book, and the costume of the figure is that of 1400. A mutilated figure of the same family, in the rich dress of the age in which she lived, lies within the altar rails. On the south side of the chancel is a monument which has been described as huge and clumsy, stiff, and in execrable taste, raised to the memory of Sir Robert Wiseman, who died the 11th of May, 1641. It consists of the recumbent figure of a knight in armour, with two ladies kneeling in recesses on the upper part of the tomb; behind is an inscription in Latin, loaded not with a description of his public services, but of his private virtues, on which Suckling observes—"Could we believe Sir Robert Wiseman to have been possessed of all the virtues and accomplishments therein ascribed to him, we might unfeignedly blush for our own



degeneracy." The offensive fulsomeness of the language justifies the sneer. He is represented as "pious, sincere, just, peaceable, steady to himself and friends, a lover of his brethren and of the muses, an excellent patron of learning and learned men, friendly, sociable, and hospitable to his neighbours, beneficent to the poor, just to all;" and the fact of his being a tetchy old bachelor is conveyed in the delicate intimation that he showed his "chasteness of body by a celibacy of 65 years." The church also contains monuments to Sir John Salter, knight, a lord mayor of London, and some members of the Jocelyn family.

There is one acre of church land in Willingale Doe; and a yearly rent-charge of £4. out of Warden's Hall, left by Robert Cole in 1732, is applied to the school, which is open to children from Willingale Spain and Shellow Bowells.

CANFIELD CASTLE.—On retracing our way through the Roothings, in the direction of Dunmow—the Stane-street of the old Roman—we come upon the Canfields, in early times the property of the De Veres, and the site of one of their baronial castles. Of Little Canfield, which lies about three miles from the town, Viscount Maynard is now the chief owner and lord of the manor. The church is a very antique structure, which has been partly re-built and tastefully restored; and the floor of the chancel contains some ancient inscriptions and brasses, one of which marks the resting-place of "Wm. Fytche, Esq. late lorde of this towne," who died in 1578. Upon an enclosure in 1839, 3A. 2R. of land were allotted to the poor. Great Canfield lies out of the high road, in the direction of the Roothings, four miles and a half from Dunmow, and contains at once objects of modern elegance and olden interest—Fitz-johns, the residence of J. M. Wilson, Esq., the lord of the manor, and the remains of the ancient castle. The mansion is a neat and pleasant building, surrounded by well-arranged extensive pleasure grounds.

The castle was not connected with any great event of historical interest—with scenes of war or deeds of treachery and blood—which is no doubt attributable to the fact that the chief seat of the De Veres was at Hedingham, and the annals of the family are more especially connected with that stronghold. Nought now remains but the artificial mount of earth, overgrown with trees, on which it stood, the moat, and the bridge by which it was entered. The castle-yard is transformed into an orchard of about two acres, and rows of fruit-trees have taken the places of knightly banners and lines of spears. Not a wreck of a wall nor a remnant of a rampart remains to show the

style of architecture; and conjecture labours in vain to trace out the date of its erection. One historian observes—

“Our antiquaries who have called it *Cænonium*, from the castle and similitude of sound, together, believe it as ancient as the time of the Romans in Britain.—There is room for other guesses which may be indulged, since we can arrive to no certainty. Fair Eddeva might fortify here before the conquest, after she had sold the castle of Stortford to the Bishop of London; or De Vere might do it during the wars between Maud and Stephen, at which time it appears that Geoffrey de Mandeville aimed at getting Stortford into his hands, by the interest of Maud, by some exchange with the Bishop, or to have the fortress there demolished; or De Vere might fortify here upon king John's destroying the Bishops castle of Weytemore in Stortford, for executing the king's interdict. Weytemore was the chief place of strength hereabouts, which seems to have been erected during the heptarchy, because the estates hereabouts which were subject to pay castle-guard lie on the east Saxon side the bank which ran through Hertfordshire, from Theobalds to Barley; and this was their defence against inroads from Mercia.”

The park, which contained 200 acres, has long been converted into a goodly farm, and is now the property of Lord Maynard. The copyholders of the manor have peculiar privileges, descending from ancient times, and confirmed by a decree of Chancery in the reign of Elizabeth. The lord has no right to cut down trees on the manor; but the tenants may, without his licence, fell woods, underwoods, and also timber for repairs, and re-building—make leases of their lands for three years, and carry marl or compost from one copyhold to another. The fine is certain, 5s. an acre for lands, and nothing for the messuage; for large tenements without land 5s., and for the smaller 2s. 6d.

The church, a small ancient structure, with remarkably narrow windows, contains many inscriptions to the Wiseman family. The most ancient is the following on a tomb in the church, on which are the effigies of a man and six boys and a woman and six girls—

“Here lyeth Jhon Wyseman, esquier, sometyne one of the auditors of our sovaigne lorde kynge Henry the eight of the revenues of the crown, and Agnes his wife; which John dyed, Aug. 17, 1558.”

Under an arched pediment in the east wall of the chancel, are half-length effigies of Sir William Wiseman and his lady, with their hands united; the latter of whom “put off the troublesome robe of mortality the 11th day of May, 1662, leaving four and twentyeth year of her age unfinished, whose body lies here mortgaged to the grave, until the grand jubile: the resurrection.”

**THE EASTONS—SEAT OF LORD MAYNARD.**—The Eastons, Great and Little, lie two or three miles to the north-west, in a beautiful position upon the banks of the Chelmer. Great Easton was held by the sergeancy of being the king's

lanner at the coronation; and in 1597 we find the estate in Oliver Cromwell, of Hinchbrook, in Huntingdon, who sold it to Henry Maynard, Esq. In the long roll of the former possessors of Little Easton we find the usual musty and moss-covered names—the De Mandevilles and the De Warrens, who held the lands and manorial rights at the time of the survey; the family of De Windsor, the Bouchiers, Throgmortons, and others. In 1590 Queen Elizabeth granted it—to be held *in capite* by the 20th part of a knight's fee, and payment of ward silver to Windsor Castle—to Henry Maynard, Esq., the ancestor of the present noble Viscount, the Lord Lieutenant of the county, whose lordly mansion and wide park absorb a large part of the lesser parish. This family, it appears, draws its blood from beyond the Conquest. The name of Mainard is found in the list of those who came in with the Norman; and the stock took root and flourished in Kent and Devonshire. Henry, to whom this grant was made, was a person of some political note: he acted as secretary to the great Burleigh, and represented St. Alban's in three parliaments. In 1601 he was returned for Essex; and in 1608 served the office of High Sheriff, and was knighted by James I. His second son, John, was made a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Charles I.; and Charles, from whom the present peer is descended, was one of the auditors of the exchequer. His eldest son, William, founder of the professorship of logic at Cambridge, by whom he was succeeded in 1610, was created a baronet, and nine years after Baron Maynard, of Wicklow, in Ireland. In 1627 Charles I. raised him to the dignity of an English Baron, by the title of Baron Maynard, of Estaines Parva (Little Easton). His son, William, the second lord, was one of those who battled against the whining and wild excesses of democracy, and the domineering dictation of the army, in the troubles provoked by the blind and unconstitutional courses of the first Charles and James II. He was a royalist, and as such was marked out as a fit object of plunder, and subject for persecution. He was one of those impeached of high treason in 1647, but had the good fortune to escape the block; and the following letter, the original of which is preserved amongst the relics of the Maynard family, shows the estimation in which he was held by Charles II.:—

“*Brussels, March 16, 1660.*

“Your of the 13th of January came not to me till within these 3 or 4 dayes, otherwise you should have knowne sooner that it was very welcome to me, and I do assure you ther is no man upon earth whose affection and unbyassed resolutions to serve me, I do look with more confidence then upon yours, and therefore you may reasonably presume that my kindnesse to you is proportionable. I hope it will not be long before I shall have a good occasion to manifest it, without prejudice to you, and n the meane time that will use your interest

all ways to make preparations accordingly ; and you believe that I do enough long for the good however that I may let you know how much I am

Your very affectionate friend,

CHARLES R."

The noble lord lived to assist in the restoration, and to share its honours. On Charles ascending the throne from which his father had been dragged, Lord Maynard was made a privy councillor and comptroller of the king's household ; and James II. appointed him *custos rotulorum* of Essex. Charles, the sixth baron, was created a viscount in 1766. The present peer succeeded his uncle in 1824 ; and the state of the various churches of which he is the patron—the gift of a house each to the church clerks of Great Easton, Little Easton, and Tilty, and the schools which have been built in almost every parish with which he is connected—testify to the benevolence and pious care of the noble lord and his immediate predecessor.

EASTON LODGE, the family seat, was originally built in 1593, by Sir William Maynard. Having been extended and improved at different periods, and stored with objects of art, it has grown into one of the palatial ornaments of the county ; though about twelve years ago a desolating fire laid a great part of the mansion in ruins, and swept away many of the paintings—the works of master hands—and the articles of *virtu* and antiquarian interest which liberality and taste had been gathering for nearly three centuries. As we enter from the Thaxted road we behold the noble park, extending over nearly 1,200 acres, affording a drive through it two miles in extent, thickly studded with clumps of vigorous timber, and interspersed here and there with the skeleton forms of giant oaks, whose whitened trunks show centuries of decay. Troops of deer start at our approach, and noble stags toss their antlered heads and walk leisurely away. The village church stands within the precincts of the park ; and, leaving it on the right, we cross, by a bridge, a beautiful lake, over whose surface the moor-hen scuds, alarmed by the rattle of our wheels. A short drive brings us to the south front of the Lodge, and upon its lawn, which is cut off from the park by palisades. We at once perceive that part of the buildings of a former age have been engrafted into the work of the modern architect. The old mansion was a wooden structure in the Elizabethan style, with the large bay windows of that period. The fire we have noticed, which took place on the 31st of January, 1847, destroyed the centre of the mansion. The late Mr. Hopper, who was called in to repair the ruin, rebuilt that portion, raising a stately front, with towers and windows in the

Tudor style, weaving in as wings the Elizabethan portions which had escaped the fiery wreck, and imparting a uniform appearance to the whole. The cost to the noble proprietor was between £10,000 and £12,000. On passing into the mansion, the hall strikes the visitor by the elegance of its style and the extent of its proportions. It is 38 feet long by 20 wide. The walls, which are covered with Parian cement, giving to them the sharpness and appearance of the finest marble, are supported on each side by eight bold Sienna columns; and the lofty, arched, and chastely paneled roof gives to the apartment an air of imposing grandeur. The rich mantel-piece is surmounted by a bust of the present Viscount, by Milne; and the centre of the hall is enriched by a splendid table, part of the princely spoils of Stowe, when the treasures of Buckingham were brought to the hammer,—the top covered with fine black leather, the edges tastefully ornamented, and supported at the corners by large figures of angels, richly gilt. To the left of the hall, their proportions in keeping with it, are the dining room, the billiard room, and other apartments, their walls teeming with paintings, most of them portraits of members of the Maynard family, or personages with whom private friendships or political events have brought them into connexion. In the dining room are portraits of the Earl of Stafford and Charles I., the latter by Vandyke. There, too, are Serjeant Maynard—the only one of the learned wearers of the coif who had the loyalty and courage to stand up and defend his king on his trial; the present Lord Maynard; a fine portrait of a lady, from the hand of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and one of the beauties of Lely's time, which that artist loved to paint—Miss Bannister, who brought the Lancaster estates into the family; and near by is Sir Ralph Hopetown, with one of the young Maynards leaning over him. Amongst the paintings in the other rooms in this part of the mansion are a portrait of the late Lord Maynard, by Sir William Beechy; of Sir William Maynard, the builder of the Lodge; the Princess of Orange; with the heads of many of the eminent or notorious men of the time of Charles; and a veritable Domenichino, which lay for a long time amongst rubbish in a carpenter's shop, till it caught the eye of a connoisseur, when it was cleansed from the barbarous daubs of the men who had used its canvass to try the colour of their paints, and restored to its place of dignity on these noble walls. In the drawing room on the right of the hall, superbly furnished in the style of Louis Quatorze, and the other suite of rooms in this direction, the eye of the visitor revels amongst the frescoes

which adorn some of the walls, the objects of taste which lie scattered around, and the magic strips of canvass through which the painter has "made beauty half immortal." Noble corridors, with finely panneled roofs and walls of Parian cement, separate the new from the ancient parts of the building. Crossing one of these we enter the library, at the door of which the conflagration of 1847 was arrested, and find it well stored with ancient and classic literature, the poetry of our own land, and the most beautiful productions of the modern press. At the lower end of the spacious apartment are portraits of all the lords of Easton Lodge, from the first baron downwards; while on other parts of the walls are found the heads of the learned Bacon, and Archbishop Parker, and a good painting of Devereux, Earl of Essex, taken at the period when he rejoiced in that sunny favouritism of Elizabeth, which in the end proved so fatal to him. Returning to the centre of the mansion, a broad staircase of stone leads upwards to the range of state and other bed rooms; the chaste fittings of these, with rich canopies of cashmere, silk, and gold—some of them ornamented with the Viscount's coronet—give to the large and lofty apartments a fine effect. Proceeding our way onward through corridor and gallery, we gain the western end of the mansion, and enter a long and noble apartment (now temporarily divided into three) evidently of a date subsequent to that of the original building, on the ceiling of which the hand of the Italian moulder has lavished some of its choicest handiwork, the whole being covered in compartments with classical, scriptural, and other subjects, beautifully executed in basso-relievo.

On looking out upon the country around from the upper windows of the Lodge, or the battlements above, we perceive the mansion

"Sweetly stands, 'mid fruitful lands,  
Green meads and pastures fair,  
And waving woods that far around  
A robe of gladness wear."

The thickly-timbered park in front is so artistically laid out that long vistas afford pleasant glimpses of the country beyond, terminated in one direction by the renovated spire of Canfield. If we turn to the northward the eye falls first, perhaps, upon the neighbouring spire of Thaxted, and the four churches of which the Lord of Easton is the patron, nestling round the demesne, and then travels over a wide range of country towards Hertfordshire, till, veering round, it may rest, in the clear light of a summer day, upon the green hill of Galleywood, beyond Chelmsford.

The fine range of grounds about the Lodge are laid out with



taste, and kept in excellent order. A little to the north-west of the mansion stretch the extensive kitchen gardens, green-houses, and graperies. Emerging from these into the fernery, we enter on winding walks, here partaking of the deep shade of the jungle, there breaking into open lawn and well managed parterres, enriched at one part with a collection of roses, the finest in the country hereabouts. Thus we are brought back to the north front of the mansion. Strolling round the eastern end, a wicket opens, and we enter the Temple—an enclosure, in the centre of which stands a leafy and lofty structure of nature's raising, being fashioned by the hand of the skilful forester out of the living hornbeam, from whose shaded aisles a series of arches opens upon the soft turf and gay flower beds around. It is indeed a temple in which the young mind may dream away the summer hour in poetic devotion.

The church of Little Easton, a neat and ancient building, has on the south side the Bouchiers' or Bowsers' chapel, where rest some of that ancient family; but it is now used as the burial place of the Maynards, and its monuments furnish a history of the race. On the south side of this chapel is the following record of the first possessor of the estate:—

Here resteth in assured hope, to rise in Christ, Sir Henry Maynard, knt. descended of the ancient family of Maynards, in the county of Devon, and Dame Susan his wife, daughter and one of the coheirs of Thomas Pierson, Esq., to whome she bore eight sonnes and two daughters. He ended this life 11th May, 1610, his lady, six sonnes, and two daughters then lyvinge.

And underneath is the following translation of some Latin lines:—

Whence, who, and what I was, how held in court,  
My prince, the peers, my countrie will report,  
Aske these of me (good reader) not these stones,  
They know my lyfe, these do but hold my bones.

Below, the effigies of Sir Henry and his lady rest upon a tomb, in a posture of devotion. Near this is the tomb of the wife of Sir William Maynard, who died in 1618; she lies in a recumbent posture, her right hand holding a book and her left resting on a human skull. On the west side of the chapel is the monument of the first lord; and beneath his effigy, and that of his lady, in alabaster, is the following inscription:—

“Sacred to the memory of the right honourable William Lord Maynard, baron of Estaines in the county of Essex, and of Wincklow in Ireland. He for many years executed the office of lord lieutenant of the counties of Essex and Cambridge, under king Charles the First, with great applause both of king and people, and with a conscience unblamable. In every respect, indeed, he was a man calculated to supply the place of the most worthy prince, of the defender of the peace, the laws, and the catholic faith as 'tis professed by the church of England. But when the rage of fanaticism daily increased, when even religion itself was banished, then he bid adieu to a restless, rebellious, and ungrateful country; so great an example was he of truly christian love



(as well towards God as towards his neighbour) to his unworthy country, which at length he happily changed for a better, namely a heavenly, on the 10th Dec., 1640, in the 55th year of his age.

Near him lies Hannah, his right honourable wife, descended from the ancient family of the Everards of Langley, in the county of Essex, who after she had seen an only son and five excellent daughters adorned with their parents' virtues, which they so excelled in as to excite the envy of mankind, followed her husband to heaven, there to enjoy again his amiable and most happy company among the saints, on the 5th of August, in the year of our Lord 1647.

The most superb monument of all, however, occupies the east-side, and upon it wealth and the sculptor have been alike lavish. It was raised upwards of a century ago as a general family memorial, and the visitor will be struck with its grandeur and beauty. It rises to a height of upwards of 20 feet, and is 12 feet wide. On a fine pedestal of white and veined marble are the statues and medallions of various members of the family, beautifully executed; behind is an Egyptian pyramid in marble; in the centre of the pedestal, a variety of curiously wrought emblematical devices; and the family arms and an arched pediment surmount the whole. Beneath the figures is this inscription:—

“ Within this vault lie interred the bodies of the right hon. William Lord Maynard, who died February 3, 1698, aged 76; and of the Lady Dorothy, his wife, daughter of Sir Robert Banastre, knt., who died Oct. 30, 1649, aged 27. And of the right hon. Banastre Lord Maynard, their son, who died March 4, 1717, aged 76. And of the lady Elizabeth Grey, his wife, and daughter of Henry earl of Kent, who died Sept. 24, 1714. And of the hon. William Maynard, their eldest son, who died unmarried, March 8, 1716, aged 50. And of the right hon. Henry Lord Maynard, their next surviving son, who died unmarried, Dec. 7, 1742, aged 70. And of the right hon. Grey Lord Maynard, the successor of his brother Henry, who died unmarried, April 27, 1745, aged 65. And of the hon. Elizabeth Maynard, the sister, who died also unmarried, Oct. 4, 1720, aged 48. To the memory of all these, his most worthy ancestors, parents, brothers, and sister, by whose care, and through whose hands the honour and estates of the family, after a splendid, hospitable, and charitable use of them, have successively been transmitted to him, the right hon. Charles Lord Maynard, the youngest son of Banastre Lord Maynard, and of the lady Elizabeth, his wife, in testimony of his piety, love, and gratitude, erected this monument, A.D. 1746.

Here rest other members of the noble family; and here, too, has recently been laid the lady of the present Viscount—the daughter of R. Rabett, Esq., of Bramfield Hall, Suffolk—whose beauty and benevolence will long preserve her memory fresh at every tenant-hearth and cottage home for miles around the tomb in which she slumbers.

On the north of the chapel is an antique monument in grey marble to the last lord of the Bouchiers; and in the chancel of the church is one still older, but without any inscription.

In the church of Great Easton, which is built of flint, and stands on a commanding eminence, are various monumental inscriptions, some of them of old date; but the only one of any

local or historical importance is that on the Rev. Thomas Cecil, a rector of the parish, and a theological writer, who died in 1627; on his tomb he is made quaintly to say—

“Whilst I live with my books, I die; thus my life is my death;  
Now I have turned over the book of life; thus my death is my life.”

For establishing a free school in Great Easton, Rebecca Meade, in 1759, gave thirty acres of land in the parish, called Kerby's, and twelve acres in Weathersfield, called Cramps, for educating and clothing ten poor girls; in 1761 Lord Maynard gave a rent-charge of £5. on Great Easton Hall, for a schoolmaster to teach six boys of Great Easton and six of Little Easton; and in 1833 Viscount Maynard gave five roods of land for a school-house. The schoolmistress now teaches thirty free scholars; and the schoolmaster takes about forty, teaching four for £3. a year from the Waltham field, given by an unknown donor. In 1761 Lord Charles Maynard gave a house and appurtenances, to be kept in repair by his heirs, for the church clerk. The churchwardens have half an acre in Bexel Mead, Thaxted. In Little Easton, the almshouses near the church were built by Lord Banastre Maynard, in 1716, in satisfaction of his grandmother's will, for four poor widows, who have divided amongst them a yearly rent of £20., charged on the estate at Magdalen and High Laver. The church clerk has a house settled on him by Lord Charles Maynard.

**TILTY ABBEY.**—Almost within the home boundaries of the lordly domain of Easton, in one of those pleasant valleys which the monks usually selected to shelter their devotion from the wind, lie the remains of Tilty Abbey. These consist of the east end of its church, now used as the place of parish worship; and in the open field beyond stands the last ruin of the cloister walls, with faint remnants of the arches which supported the groined roofs, but there is little trace of the foundations of the other buildings which must have stood round about. Yonder is the Grange, where the cowed fathers stored their crops; here, on the adjacent stream, is heard the hum of the busy water mill, which probably ground the grist for the monastery table; but a shapeless lump of thick rubble wall is all that is left of the home of Tilty's mitred lords. The Abbey, dedicated to St. Mary, was founded by Maurice Fitz-Geffry, in 1133, for a brotherhood of Cistercian monks; but the fraternity appear to have been a long time in ripening their plans and putting forth their full-blown ecclesiastical splendour in this cozy vale. It was not till 1221 that the church was completed and consecrated. The holy men had, however, in the mean time, made sure of a tolerable share of this world's goods. Geffry, on the foundation, had en-

dowed the house with "his whole land of Tiletera," which Earl Ferrers, the lord paramount, confirmed; and it subsequently obtained large grants of lands, houses, or tithes, in Thaxted, Debden, High Easter, Easton, Dunmow, Ohigwell, Wethersfield, and various other parishes in the county, as well as in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Here the community dwelt in peace for more than four centuries, not only chanting their religious offices, but playing the agriculturists on a large scale; for we are told—"Cistercians or white monks had granges, that is barns, in several places; the reason of which was that the lands they held in their own hands, being discharged of tithes by Pope Paschall II. and Adrian IV., in order to cheat the incumbents of churches of their tithes, they held most of their own lands in their own hands, and had large barns or granges to lay up their crops in." The keen cowed cultivators, then, might no doubt be often seen assisting in the labours of the field, and gathering in their crops to the Grange,—not so heavy, perhaps, as those of Mr. Lawrence, its present occupant, but still tolerable for that time, as the monks, we know, were generally good farmers. In this way the abbey went on prosperously, its abbot wearing the lordly mitre, sitting in parliament, and ranking with the nobles of the land, till the Reformation came and rudely put an end to all its greatness. At this period its yearly revenues amounted to £177. 9s. 4d.—a goody provision for seven monks, the number that appeared upon its muster roll at the suppression. The last abbot of Tilty was John Palmer, who, either frightened at the change of feeling and things around him, or being in favour of the new principles, set a prompt example of obedience to the will of Henry VIII., by being the first in the county to sign the invited surrender. By that act, which was dated February 28, 1535, the abbot donned his mitre; the monks went forth and mingled with the people; the abbey was left to decay; and its possessions passed to the crown. Seven years after the site of the abbey, and most of the property belonging to it in the district, were granted to Lord Audley, of Walden; and in 1587 they were purchased for £5,000. by Henry Maynard, Esq., from whom they have descended to the present Lord of Easton.

The parish church, which is a fragment of the edifice consecrated in 1222, is an interesting sample of the style and beauty of the olden temple. The buttresses at the eastern angles, with richly decorated niches,—the noble eastern window with its five lights, set in elegant tracery work,—the ornamented stalls of the chancel, like those, if not the identical ones, in which the monks knelt at matin hour and at mass—

convey an idea of what it must have been when its long aisles stretched far away into the meadows beyond, and nobles worshipped at its altar. The church, which has been fitted up in an exceedingly neat and convenient style for public worship, contains some fine brasses and monumental inscriptions; but only two of them are prior to the suppression. One, within the communion rails, represents a man in armour, with a lady and eleven children, five males and six females, with the following inscription in Latin beneath :—

“Here lies buried, with Mary his wife, Gerard Dant, of Brockthorp, in the county of Leicester, Esq., privy counsellor to his Majesty king Henry the Eighth. He died on the 4th of May, 1520.”

The other, in the middle of the church, has been robbed of the noble cross which marked the slumbering place of the mitred head, and the inscription is almost illegible; but the tomb is that of one of the old abbots. The purport appears to be that he was a famous and good abbot, that he was born at Takeley, was named Thomas, and is now with Christ.

**CHICKNEY AND BROXTED.**—Beyond Tilty, to the left, in the furthest sequestered nook of the Hundred, near the sources of the Chelmer, lie, in the quietude of beautiful rural and woodland scenery, the small parishes of Chickney and Broxted, their little churches, on two eminences, forming pleasing features in the landscape. Lord Maynard, partly by grant from Queen Elizabeth and partly by subsequent purchase, owns the greater part of the latter, which formerly belonged to Eudo Dapifer and the monks of Ely. Lindsell, which lies in our road to Thaxted, and runs up to Hinckford Hundred on the right, is divided amongst different proprietors. New College, Oxford, has owned Priors Hall since 1508, it having been given to that body after being snatched as a priory alien from the monastery of St. Valery, in Picardy, by Henry V.

**THAXTED.**—Three miles and a half further onward, and we enter the town of Thaxted. As we advance through the long and somewhat irregular and straggling street, it is seen at a glance that it is not one of the mushroom towns of yesterday. The shape of the old gables, and the projecting upper stories of many of the houses, bear the impress of centuries long past, and some of the buildings present fine specimens of the domestic architecture of other days. The hand of improvement, however, has made havoc of these relics, for though a writer of the last century says “the houses are not to be boasted of for their elegant construction,” the modern architect has since then descended upon them with penoils and improving trowel in hand,

rebuilding mansions, remodelling shop fronts ; and, in the glory of paint and plate glass, it now presents as respectable an appearance as any town of its size in the county. It has been thought by some that the town was at one period much more extensive than at present. This arises from the terms in which places are often spoken of in ancient records. Thaxted, even in its palmiest days, when it sat under the shadow of the fostering protection of the great families who ruled around and within it, could not muster one-half of the population it can now. For instance, at the time of the dissolution of the chantries, it was set forth in an official document relating to them, that

"This towne was then a great and populous towne and a markett and thoroughfare towne, havynge in yt by estimation about the number eight hundred housling people."

The place, however, seems to have been of importance even in the time of the Saxons, and the church and its revenues belonged to the College of St. John the Baptist, at Clare, having apparently been given as part of its endowment on its foundation in the time of Edward the Confessor. When the Conqueror came, followed by his host of hungry Normans, Wisgar, a man of large possessions in the county, was lord here, but he was expelled by the strong hand, and Thaxted was given to Richard Fitz-Giselbert, who was a relative of the new king. This intruder was loaded with immense estates, and he was the founder of the great family of the Earls of Clare. In the male line of this family the lordship continued, carrying with it the stewardship of the forest of Essex for more than three centuries ; till in 1314 Gilbert de Clare was killed at the battle of Bannockburn, where he led the English van. It then descended to the female branch, and in 1341 it was divided between four co-heirs. Three of the shares were, however, reunited, and passed through various families. It was more than once forfeited to the crown in the turmoils of the time ; and being settled by Henry VIII. in 1509 as a dower upon Queen Katharine of Arragon, it came, about 1600, into the family of Smijth, and Sir William Bowyer Smijth, of Hill Hall, was till recently the lord paramount. Besides this chief lordship there are five other manors, the lands of some running into neighbouring parishes. Lord Maynard owns Yardleys, the rectory, and Priors Hall ; and Richmonds and Thaxted Lodge were purchased by Guy's Hospital in 1720. A charter for a fair here was obtained by the Earl of Gloucester, about 1310 or 1312, to be held on the eve, the day, and the morrow of St. Luke ; there are now two fairs for cattle, one on the Monday before Whitsuntide, and

the other on the 10th of August: The market, which was on Fridays, has been extinguished; an attempt was made at the beginning of the present century to revive it, but it failed. Thaxted was anciently a corporation, and it seems probable that in some cases it sent members to the great council of the nation; but the glory of the gold chain and the terror of the mace have long since departed from it. It is generally represented as having been first incorporated by Philip and Mary, by the title of "mayor, bailiffs, and commonalty of the town of Thaxted," but we find it frequently mentioned as a borough long before that period. The mother of Richard III. had a grant from her son of the manor and borough of Thaxted in 1483. Katharine of Arragon, in 1514, granted the manor and borough of Thaxted to Sir John Cutts. It is probable, therefore, that the charter of Philip and Mary was only a formal recognition of rights and privileges which had been substantially possessed and exercised centuries before. It might be supposed from this special favour of the merciless Mary that the town was a stronghold of the Roman Catholic party, but if so the inhabitants had acquired the art of readily turning according to the direction of the state wind, which many found so profitable at that period, as Queen Elizabeth gave her full confirmation to the charter. James I. increased their power and privileges. Through five reigns the town enjoyed the dignity of a corporation, the members meeting in solemn council in the guild hall, using the common seal, though they never appear to have possessed the right to a coat of arms. Dues were levied, and it would seem quarter sessions were held for the trial of offences committed within the liberty, as Serjeant Bendlowe, who resided here, is believed to have been the first recorder, and it appears, by a record of a visitation of the heralds, that George Scott, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, held that office in 1637. We learn, from the same document, that Robert Humphrey was then mayor and a justice of the peace within the borough; John Halls and Thomas Clark were the bailiffs, and there were 20 chief burgesses, of whom 10 had been mayors. The arbitrary hand of James II., however, extinguished the civic honours of the town. In the course of that monarch's general onslaught upon the corporations, a *quo warranto* was served upon Thaxted, questioning its rights, and calling upon its authorities to prove them in a court of law. A legal contest with the crown alarmed the mayor, and startled the burgesses. There is no trace of any corporate estates from which the costs could have been defrayed. It was resolved, therefore, to offer no defence. The mayor descended from his seat, the officers



doffed their civic robes, and the deserted guild or moot hall was left to decay, and remained useless until 1714, when the council chamber above the ancient market-house was repaired, and has since been used as a school. There were two other guild halls in the town, used by the religious bodies of the old times, one of which stood on the south side of the churchyard, and Morant says—

“It probably belonged originally to the guild of St. John the Baptist, but was used in after times by the rest of the religious guilds, excepting that of the rood, which had a hall of its own. These guilds being all suppressed at the reformation, the house was for some time let out for the keeping of public weddings, on which occasion the fee paid for the use of it was 16d., and called ‘the bridal.’ But in 1562 it was converted into a school, in which state it continued till the year 1711, from which time it has been the parish workhouse.”

**HORHAM HALL.**—The parish is very extensive, having seven outlying hamlets with their cluster of houses, and nearly thirty good farms. The land is in general good; and hops appear to have been grown here rather extensively at one period, as we find a contest respecting their tithe between Lord Maynard, the impropriator, and the vicar, which was settled by reference to Laud, then Bishop of London, who decided that the vicar should receive twenty pounds of good and well-dried hops to be discharged from a payment of five marks to which he was liable for the reparation of the chancel, and enjoy a pension of £30 a year from the rectory. Horham Hall, the most ancient and interesting of the remaining manor-houses, stands about two miles south-west of the town. It was originally built by Sir John Cutts, who obtained the lordship of Thaxted from Queen Catherine, at a rent of £57. 7s. for her life, and afterwards secured the reversion in fee farm from Henry VIII. He was a man of great influence at court, and held considerable property in this district. Leland gives the following account of him—

“Syr John Cutta, Knight, under-treasurer of England, bought of one Savelle, a man of fair landes in Yorshir, then beyng in troble, the lordship of Godhurste, with the ruines of a castle that standith aboute a two miles from the bank of Medwaye river, and a two miles from Maidstone. Old Cutte married the daughter and heyre of one Roodes, about Yorkshire, and had by her three hundereth markes of landes by the yere. Old Cutte builded Horham Haule, a very sumptuous house, in Ess-Sax, by Thaxstede, and there is a goodly pond or lake by it, and faire parkes thereabout.”

This mansion was celebrated for its splendour and hospitality during two or three succeeding reigns. Elizabeth resided there for a time while her sister Mary was upon the throne; and afterwards, in the course of one of her progresses,\* she turned aside

\* “Queen Elizabeth was at Horham Hall in 1571, entertained there by Sir John Cutt.”—*Nichols' Progress*, vol. 1, p. 281.



to visit the hall, along whose pleasant walks she had so often wandered, and within whose walls she had, in her days of peril, found safety from the suspicions and machinations of a court. These recollections secured for the family a continuance of the royal favour. The grandson of Sir John was knighted; and so profuse was his style of housekeeping, according to the luxury of that day, that when sickness was devastating the metropolis, her Majesty, according to Fuller, sent the Spanish ambassador to Thaxted, that he might share the most lavish hospitality to be found amongst her subjects. According to the old Essex historian, however, this Essex knight was "more magnificent than prudent." He was, in fact, one of the spendthrifts and fast men of the day; and in due time he arrived at the port in which men of that class are sure in the end to anchor—a trust deed for the satisfaction of duns and the benefit of creditors. The estate of Horham Hall became a wreck; the greater part of Thaxted departed from him; and having alienated the lordship by a deed of the nature alluded to, it came, as before stated, into the ancient family of Smijth. The mansion of Horham Hall was, in its original state, a beautiful specimen of the style adopted by the nobility for their residences after the thick-ribbed keep and the grim castle had gone out of fashion. The process of modernization however, changed much of its olden character. The must of antiquity, delightful to the nostril of the antiquarian, is gone; but there are still the large bay windows within which "good Queen Bess" has pensively sat, the ornamented gables, the decorated front, and the embattled tower at the end. The entrance hall remains in nearly its former state, having escaped the extensive reparation and alteration of the house about fifteen years ago. The foundations of a gate-house may be traced; part of the ancient moat still surrounds the building; and much remains to command for the hall the venerable regard of the visitor. Horham was long vested in the family of Sir W. Bowyer Smijth, but it passed, in 1854, with the manor of Thaxted, in an exchange of estates, to F. G. West, Esq., who unites with modern taste a reverence for the relics which time has left.

The church of Thaxted is the most noble and costly in the county—so costly, indeed, that conjecture is compelled to take large scope in tracing the means by which it could have been built. "That it was not solely at the charge of the parish is beyond all doubt," says Morant, "for though this town was formerly of much more consequence than it is now, yet still the abilities of the inhabitants, even in its most flourishing state, must have been greatly inadequate to an undertaking which in our time would require at least ten years' rent of

the whole parish,\* and in former days, when lands were less improved, and artificers better paid than at present, must have cost more than double that sum." The mystery can only be solved by the supposition that it was erected by means of royal favour, the efforts of the convent of Clare and the college of Stoke, which held the rectory down to the Reformation, and the munificence of the great families who from time to time held the property in the neighbourhood. This is borne out by the evidently piecemeal manner in which the sacred edifice was erected. The church is in the cathedral style, with a cross aisle. The length of the interior is 183 feet; the breadth 87 feet. It was long popularly supposed that the circumference on the outside was upwards of a mile, but actual measurement shows that it is only 845 yards. The building appears to have been commenced in the time of Henry III. The oldest parts are the south aisle and the south end of the cross aisle, as evidenced by the plainness of the pilasters and the compartments of the windows. This is supposed to have been erected by Lady Elizabeth Clare, daughter of that Earl of Gloucester who was known as Gilbert the Red, who became lord of Thaxted in 1262; she was assisted probably by William de Burgh, her son, whose arms appear in the windows of the nave. From the records of those who held the estates in the parish, the evidence afforded by the varied styles of architecture, and the different arms and ornaments in the church, it is concluded that Lionel Duke of Clarence, son of the last-mentioned noble, erected the south porch; Edmund Earl of March, known for his taste in architecture, the north aisle and north part of the transept, in which great elegance and taste are displayed; the north porch by Edward IV., who also completed the chancel begun by the Earls of March. The tower, which, from the shape of the building, it appears was originally intended to be erected in the middle of the church, but stands at the west end, is believed to have been built by the last Earl of March in 1424. This is surmounted by an elegant octagonal spire, rising to the height of 181 feet, and, from the eminence on which the building stands, forms a sort of landmark to all the country round. In 1757 this tower and spire, which had fallen into decay, were repaired by subscription, at a cost of £600. In 1814 the spire was struck by lightning; scaffolding was erected at a cost of £400 to repair it, but a fearful storm swept it down, together with the remainder of the spire, and considerably damaged the church. The injury was repaired and the present spire erected in 1822, by the liberality of Mr.

\* The land in the parish let at 6d. per acre in 1872.

Cheshire, a gentleman of Warwickshire, who expended more than £1,000 in the work. The inhabitants naturally feel proud of their magnificent church; sums are set apart from charitable endowments to preserve and beautify it, and it is kept in a state worthy of its architectural character and the munificence which founded it.\*

There are a number of monuments and inscriptions in the church, the earliest of which is of the year 1681; but none concerning persons whose names possess general historical importance. Outside the tower of the church is an inscription to Peter Platt, stone mason, erected just a century ago—1759—by his master, who records thereon that—"This south side of the tower, repaired under his direction in the year before his death, will remain a lasting monument—

"Where Peter lies, 'tis fit this tower should show  
That for his skill itself had lain as low."

The parish is rich in endowments for public purposes and the poor. First, there is the town estate, which it might almost be thought was a remnant of the old corporate property, having been vested in trust for the general benefit of the inhabitants since the reign of Henry VIII. It consists of Yardsley's farm of 188 acres and the pest house, bringing in about £160. a year. Of this, £40. is applied to the repair of the church; £40. to the highways; £37. to the master of the school in the guildhall, who teaches 80 free scholars; £20. to a schoolmistress, who teaches 20 poor girls; and clothes, &c., are at times provided for the pupils. The next is Lord Maynard's charity, which consisted of a sum of £4,000. left by William Lord Maynard in 1698, which was laid out in the purchase of the rectory of Potton, in Bedfordshire, to which lands have since been allotted in lieu of tithes; and Giffords Manor and Clopton House farm in Wickhambrook and Depden, Suffolk. During about 12 years' chancery litigation—up to 1827—the proceeds accumulated, and were laid out in the purchase of £3,117. 8s. 5d. Three per cent. Consols, so that the rents, profits, and dividends of the

\* Archbishop Parker, in a letter to the Lord Treasurer, and Queen Elizabeth, thus writes—"I am requested to signify at whose charges the reparations of the channsell of Thaxted, appropriated to the priory of Stoke, whereof I was the late dean, ought to be done. Your honours shall understand that the college did use to bear the charges, excepting that for the glazing—the college bore two parts and the vicar the third—and thus pray I your good honours to extend your favour for convenient allowance in the maintayning of such fair edifices, builded of good zeal and devotion of our predecessors to God's glory, and the comfort of the people, which in that parish are very great. Thus I commit your honours, &c. Lamberth, 12th September."—The year is not mentioned, but on the 25th February, 1562, a warrant was issued from the Marquess of Winchester, Lord Treasurer, for the repairs of this church.—*Neale*.

charity are now rather over £500. a year. Under the new scheme in which the chancery suit terminated, £100. of this is appropriated to the vicar, according to the directions of the original donor; £30. to the receiver; £40. 13s. 6d for land tax; £10. to beautifying the church; £130. is distributed amongst the poor who have large families; £72. is applied to apprenticing poor children; £45. in afterwards setting them up in trades; and £54. in marriage portions to poor virgins. The balance of about £30. is applied to incidental expenses, and occasional improvements in the parish. Besides these, there is the chantry converted into almshouses for 16 poor aged persons, who live there rent free; and 15 parcels of land, given by various persons by will or deed, in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. These are managed, and the funds administered, by Hunt's feoffees—a body of trustees appointed in 1832, who gave £13. 13s. in bread to the poor weekly; £57. 4s. in stipends of 1s. per week to twenty-two aged widows; £7. 16s. at 6d. per week to six other widows, with £1. 15s. for clothing; £11. 14s. at 9d. per week to six poor aged men; £2. 10s. in bread on the 5th of November; £6. 7s. 6d. to the church; and incidental expenses swallow up the residue. Still further, there is a sum of £5. 13s. given either by Henry VIII. or Queen Elizabeth, and paid yearly to the churchwardens out of the Exchequer for new coats for seven poor aged parishioners; and a rent-charge of £3. on Bardfield Place Farm, left by Sergeant Bendlowe in 1571, for the poor in the almshouses. With these numerous charities, and the allotment system largely carried out by Lord Maynard, pauperism and poor-rates ought hardly to be heard of in the parish; but there is little diminution in them as compared with the districts around.

## Harlow Half-Hundred.

This small hundred does not exceed in extent some of the larger parishes in the county. Joining Dunmow Hundred on the east, it skirts the forest woodlands, and westward is bounded by the Stort, which divides Essex from Hertfordshire. It is eleven miles long by from three to six broad; and contains the following eleven parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Harlow .....	The Saxon <i>Har</i> , white, or <i>Here</i> , an army; and a rising ground .....	4000	2322	9174	700 10 6	320 12 6
Gt. Hallingbury	<i>Hai</i> , healthy; <i>ing</i> , a meadow; .....	2651	710	3343	720 0 0	
Lt. Hallingbury	and <i>bury</i> , a mansion.....	1612	517	2265	851 17 0	
Hatfield Broad	An open heath and an ex- .....	8810	2034	9776	1775 0 0	100 0 0
Oak .....	traordinary oak .....					
Latton.....	<i>Late-town</i> —lately erected.....	1605	243	3030	*385 0 0	
Matchingham .....		2384	652	3500	440 0 0	246 0 0
Nettewell .....	The Saxon <i>neaf</i> , cattle; and <i>well</i> —cattle well .....	1521	365	2971	220 0 0	
Great Parndon..	<i>Pearroe</i> , a park, and <i>dun</i> or .....	2211	438	3445	599 16 7	
Little Parndon..	<i>din</i> —hill or valley .....	534	62	1439	186 0 0	
Roydon .....	<i>Ray</i> and <i>dun</i> —a sweet hill .....	2995	†902	6623	479 0 0	140 0 0
Sheering.....	Shire or county meadow .....	1628	514	4444	507 0 0	

The district is conveniently situated for communication with the neighbouring counties; the railway, which twines with the Stort along its border, occasionally plunges into it, and throws out its stations here and there. The scenery in the summer months is exceedingly picturesque. As we ascend some of the hill tops of the hundred, we catch glimpses of rich vales, quiet farms, and scattered villages, with a dark mass of forest land in the distance. There are no striking historical events connected with the locality—no battle field to wander over, nor castle ruin to inspect; but we find it to have been in Roman Catholic times a very nest of monks, there being five monastic institutions within it, while the neighbouring Abbey of Waltham drew much of its fatness from tracts of its land.

HARLOW, which lies on the high road to Cambridge and Newmarket, at about 23 miles from London, and gives name to the hundred, is a parish of some extent, and an ancient market town—though changing circumstances, and the loose and shifting allegiance of trade, have reduced it to the quietude and dimensions of a large village. Its market, held on Saturdays, was, in the early part of the last century, of considerable im-

\* Latton was in ancient days a vicarage dependent upon the Priory, but Sir J. Meton settled the great tithes upon the minister.

† Roydon Hamlet is in Waltham Hundred.

portance. The woollen manufacture which was carried on here largely at that period gave an air of activity to the place and extensive employment to the poor. The factories, however, were closed; the manufacture departed; the market decayed; the wool fair, which long survived, was at last discontinued; the rail came and robbed the town of its through traffic; and thus it is found by the stray traveller a clean little country town, with its spindles and its looms almost forgotten, and little to distinguish it from an ordinary Essex village—save that it is the capital of the hundred, and has a neat little police station, which was built and presented to the county by J. Perry Watlington, Esq. An attempt, made some years ago to revive its market, was a failure; but its cattle fairs yet command considerable trade. They are held on Bush Common, near the hamlet of Potter-street, which takes its name from the potteries formerly carried on there, and is two miles from the town.

From the many coins of that people found in the parish and neighbourhood, it appears that the Romans had a halting or dwelling place here while they held the land; and many families of note lorded it over the serfs of Harlow in Saxon and Norman times. Harlow Bury was given to the abbey of Bury St. Edmund's by Thurston, son of Wina, in the time of Edward the Confessor; and the lordly abbot of that house appears to have made it a halting place, where he feasted and sojourned for a time, as he travelled to and fro in attending parliament. The ecclesiastical owner had peculiar concessions made to him in respect to this manor. "King Stephen remitted to him the assarts of Harlow. King John granted that the woods here should be exempt from the regards of the forest, hunting only excepted; that they might assart the wood of Rokey, belonging to this manor; and that they might make their land wainable—that is, turn it to tillage—without being subject to the regards." The abbot and his retinue, however, appear to have eaten up the estate on these periodical visits; as we find that Pope Boniface IX. appropriated the proceeds to the abbot's table. But if not a place of fasting, it was occasionally one of prayer. A large chapel was built close to the mansion—partly, it is probable, for the use of the tenants, and partly that the abbot and his followers might there chant the mass and sing the vesper hymn during their stay. This chapel still remains, with its fine circular headed door, and its small antique windows; but Mr. Barnard, the owner and occupier of the estate, uses it, as it has been used for a number of years, for the purposes of a granary—sacks occupy the site of the altar, and

the aisles and chancel receive the produce of the neighbouring fields.

There were several other manors in the parish—New Hall, near the church, anciently called Brent Hall, from the mansion being burnt down; Kechin Hall, near Potter-street, which is believed to have derived its name from its being appropriated to supply provender to the abbot's kitchen; and Huberts Hall. All were held of Harlow Bury. Welds or Gladwyns belongs to Holt White, Esq., having been purchased of the Duke of Bedford by Mr. Holt, of Rochford, whose estates passed to Mr. White, of London, and the two family names were united.

**MOOR HALL.**—The chief modern mansion, however, at the present day is the manor-house of Moor Hall, the seat of J. Perry Watlington, Esq., one of the present members for South Essex, which stands in the midst of extensive and tasteful grounds about a mile north-east of the town. This estate is believed to have been part of the possessions of the great Earl of Boulogne; and in 1820 we find it held by Matthew de Wodeham, under Lord Scales. About 1450 it belonged to the Duke of Buckingham, and the Rugge family held under him this "manor of Moore-hall, by the service of 16d. per annum, and suit at his hundred court of Harlowe." From the Rugge family it passed to that of Henshawe, of whom it was purchased, towards the close of the last century, by the late J. Perry, Esq., of Blackwall. His son, the present possessor, took the name of Watlington as the heir of George Watlington, Esq., of Aldenham, his grandfather by the maternal side. Ascending the hill from the old church, and taking the road to Matching, the park and shrubberies are seen skirting the road on the left, the plantations shutting out the building from the public view. Entering at the lodge gate, a short but winding and shaded drive brings us to the principal or south-eastern front of the mansion; and a glance around shows that the Hall is placed in a delightful spot. It stands on the summit of a gentle hill, with the green lands of the park gracefully falling to a fine stream of water that winds through the valley below; while, on the opposite side, the ground swells up again to about half a mile away, and, clothed with clumps of trees, shuts in, in this direction, the sweetly picturesque and quiet scene. To the north-east the view stretches far away over the surrounding country, and from the fine lawns and well kept flower gardens,—or passing a little wicket to a green walk between a double row of huge elm trees which skirt the park for about a quarter of a mile on this side,—glimpses are caught of Stortford spire in the distance; the village of Sawbridgeworth, the hamlets, with quiet smoke-



wreaths ascending from their cottage hearths, halls, farm-houses, and woodlands, lie between ; and Dorrington's, the family seat of the Glyns, stands boldly out on the neighbouring hill, the whole making up a beautiful Essex landscape. The extensive grounds, tasteful walks, and kitchen gardens—the latter of which lie to the westward of the house, with their appendant graperies and pine-houses, are vigilantly and well kept up.

The mansion itself is a good building, with an air of modern freshness about it ; time and the improving trowel having left not a visible vestige of the manor-house of olden days. The front is in the Doric style ; and the portico, raised three steps, and supported by six noble fluted pillars, extends nearly the whole width of the building. The interior is fitted up and furnished with all the elegance that belongs in these days to the home of the English gentleman—mingled with works of art and gems of taste ; and as we wander from room to room we feel we could cull a sweet descriptive catalogue, did we not fear to invade that protecting privacy which is alike the right of the manor-house hearth and of the humblest home. The hall, from which a bold circular staircase leads to the range of sleeping and other rooms above, is enriched with several statues, including a fine one from the hand of Theed. To the right of this apartment is a museum, rich with spoils wrenched from the hand of time, or gathered from many lands, including a beautiful collection of birds from Australia and Scotland. On the walls of the noble dining-room, to the left of the hall, are portraits of the Bishop of Melbourne and of the late Mr. Perry, the uncle and father of the present possessor of the estate. In the drawing-rooms, too, which are situate a little to the rear, looking out upon the lawn, their cream-coloured walls, with gold and enamelled pilasters, and drapery of blue figured satin, giving them an air of elegant luxury—on the mantel and walls of the beautiful boudoir—in the justice room, where the squire discharges the magisterial duties of his position—and in other apartments, are portraits and sweet little paintings by master hands, many of them the productions of modern artists, including a good likeness of Mrs. Watlington, and a family group of Mr. Watlington and his three sisters. In other parts of the mansion we find a billiard room, a large and well stored library, and an archery room fitted with materials for equipping a group to “wing the swift arrow from the twanging yew ;” for the sports of the bow and the bat find ready encouragement on the green turf of Moor Hall park.

THE REFORMATORY SCHOOL, established in 1856, principally

through the exertions of Mr. Perry Watlington, lies as it were under the wing of Moor Hall, in a pleasant and airy spot, about a mile away to the south. As we approached this receptacle for the young criminal corruption of the county we could hardly divest our mind of the idea of high walls and handcuffs. As, however, we reached the building and found it surrounded by a neat low paling, with well-kept garden and parterres in place of prison-walls, we could not but admire the scene and the system—the means by which philanthropy takes the arm of the young culprit with a firm but friendly hand, and leads him away from his old paths instead of leaving him to be driven and flogged into virtue. The Reformatory itself is a neat new building of red brick, which might at first be mistaken for the ordinary homestead of a farm. It is not large, but ample for the purpose. An air of cleanly comfort runs through the whole, without any of those indulgences which it would be unjust to struggling honesty to lavish upon sin in this its transition state. Besides the apartments of Mr. Joseph Chaplin, the superintendent, whose wife acts as matron—which are so contrived as to enable him to have a constant eye upon his hopeful family—there are upon the ground floor a kitchen and lavatory, and a general day, dining, and school-room for the boys. The walls are hung round, not with pikes and blunderbuses to excite terror, but holy texts to soften and subdue the mind; and above the mantel-piece is seen a respect-board, upon which, as a gentle spur of encouragement, the names of the most meritorious are recorded with honour; while in contrast to this the dark cell for the rebellious and the bad has not been forgotten in the building. Above is a large, light, and airy sleeping-room, with narrow iron bedsteads ranged in rows on each side. All is now quiet in the house; but as we look from the windows we behold the pupils—there are 20 of them—busy with the hoe, the spade, or the weeding-hook, upon the little farm of 24 acres which surrounds the dwelling. They have eaten the morning meal; passed the allotted time with the schoolmaster; listened to the directing word of the superintendent; and have now gone forth to labour—real labour, such as will hereafter enable their own right hands to earn an honest shilling. The superintendent is with them—a man of intelligence, skilled in husbandry, and capable of exercising moral control—taking part in the business of the field and directing the operations. The effects of discipline are apparent in the whole group; but anything like prison restraint is imperceptible. A system like this is at first no doubt irksome to the young “Arabs of society,” who have roamed our, to them, desert towns, making

prey of all that came secretly within their grasp ; but we may trace the gradual effect of it in their faces. That youth who just now ran from the field to hold our horse we take to be a recent arrival. He bears on his countenance the haggard marks of poverty and sin—the stain of the streets is still upon his soul. Others of longer stay appear to have become more purified by the process. Regular fare and rest, and a growing sense of christian dignity, are rounding the emaciated cheeks, and obliterating the felon brand. There is cheerful hope in the eye of that youth with the red stripe of meritorious distinction on his arm, as he respectfully answers our questions, and glances at the fine and waving crop of wheat his labour has assisted to raise. We saw his box just now standing in the passage, securely packed, and directed to Toronto, where a situation and a fresh start in life have been secured for him. It may fairly be expected that many a young plant, plucked from the prison-house and the polluted home, thus trained and transplanted, will yet bear goodly fruit.

The Reformatory, which is adapted for the reception of twenty-four inmates, whose qualifications for admission are a conviction of crime, and the undergoing a certain period of imprisonment, has been in operation three years. A sum of £1,087. 5s. was raised by public subscription for founding it, and its annual income, derived from like sources, amounts to £429. 12s. 10d.

The old church of Harlow—which, with the rectory, was originally appendant to the manor of Harlow Bury—stands on a hill a short distance from the town. It was anciently of the cathedral form, with the steeple in the middle. The sacred edifice, however, was laid in ruins by a fire on the 28th of April, 1708, and in rebuilding and restoring it a cupola was substituted for the tower, and a steeple of brick was added at the west end. It is a noble structure, rich in carvings and painted glass. Mr. Taylor, the vicar, expended a considerable sum in beautifying it after it had been raised from its desolation ; and many of the nobility and gentry gave their arms to decorate the north and south windows of the chancel. Other windows were similarly adorned. In the east end is a painting of the twelve apostles ; in the south was placed a representation of Solomon's history finely executed, brought by E. Field, Esq., from Stansted Bury. The ceiling is ornamented with a painting of the Transfiguration. The whole of the church has recently undergone thorough renovation ; and parts of it have been rebuilt,—the pious work having been done principally at the expense of Mr. Perry Watlington. A huge monument of 1652, to Alexander

Stafford, of High Holborn, and his wife, which encumbered the south nave, has been removed, and the two effigies from it, finely restored by White, have been placed on the wall. A large faculty pew in this part of the church was given up by the owner of Moor Hall; and it is evident to the visitor that liberality and the hand of modern taste have done much to increase the accommodation of the worshippers and improve the house of prayer. In the chancel and nave are several brasses and tombs, mostly of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but none of much historical importance. The most ancient inscription is the following, under the arch which separates the south nave from the middle part—

"Here lieth interred the body of Thos. Druncaster, Principal Secretary of King Henry the Seventh, 1490."

Though only one person is here referred to, beneath are the figures of two, a man and a woman; but Mr. Bloxham, who lately saw them, believes them to be much older than the date of the inscription; and the conclusion is that they are the spoil of some more ancient tomb which accident or ignorance has wedded to the words. Beneath the arch of the north nave is the following—

"Near this place lyeth the body of William Sumner, the late tenant to John Reeve, the last Lord Abbot."

There were two chantries belonging to the church. One was at the altar of St. Petronilla the Virgin, which, from three niches brought to light by the late restorations, appears to have been in the south nave. The other, at the altar of St. Thomas, was founded by John Stanton, the first rector in the London register, to pray for the souls of himself, his father, mother, and a former abbot of St. Edmund's. It was endowed with lands and buildings in Harlow, Great Parndon, North-mead, and High Laver, valued at the suppression at £9. 10s. This property was leased out by the crown after the reformation, and coming afterwards to Alexander Stafford, gentleman, of Holborn, was placed in trust, to pay £20. a-year to four poor divinity scholars of St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge, and £5. each to two poor scholars of Pembroke College, Oxford. Near by, in Church-gate-street, are spacious and elegant schools, erected a few years since by J. P. Watlington Esq., and supported by the bounty of his lady. There are two other churches in the parish—one in the centre of the town, erected in 1840, in memory of the Rev. Charles Sanderson Miller, the former vicar of the parish; the other at Bush Common, built partly by the vicar, and partly by subscription, in 1834.

The charities of the parish are numerous. There are four alms-

houses for four poor widows, built in 1717, with the produce of £100. left by Francis Reeve, in 1689 ; two others in the church-yard, also for poor widows, were founded by William Newman ; there are three rent-charges of 8s. 4d. each for the repair of the houses ; the other three, called Stafford's almshouses, are in Church-gate-street—these, too, are for widows. The other charities are—a house and garden ; two tenements and several garden plots left by John Godsafe, vicar of the parish, in 1590 ; a cottage and six acres of land near Harlow Common, left by George Benson, in 1643, for providing coats, breeches, and drab cloth for poor men, and camlet gowns and linsy woolsey petticoats for poor women, marked with the letters " G. B." ; £160., with which Noakes Crofts were purchased, left by John Wright, in 1659, to pay 6s. 8d. for a sermon yearly, 12s. 6d. for a dinner for the trustees of Stafford's charity, a gown every second year, and a load of wood yearly for the inmates of Stafford's almshouses ; a rent-charge of 20s. out of Hallison's Meads, Sawbridgeworth, given by E. Wolley, in 1617 ; a rent-charge of £12., out of the manor of Bignor's, Deptford, given by A. Stafford, in 1651, to pay £2. for repairing his monument, £3. for ringing the bell, and keeping the clock in order ; £2. for the widows in Newman's almshouses ; and £5. for distribution amongst the poor ; a house and garden left by the Rev. John Taylor, in 1724, for 20s. to each inmate in Newman's almshouses, 20s. to one in Stafford's, and the rest to the poor ; a rent-charge of £5. 4s. out of Drinkwater's, left by Richard Harrison, in 1734, for a distribution of bread ; £100., since vested in £158. 5s. 1d. Three per Cent. Consols, left by Edward Wise, in 1792, for £1. to each inmate of Reeve's almshouses, and 14s. 10d. for repairing his tomb ; and the dividends of £210. new Three-and-a-half Stock, left by J. Perry, Esq., in 1809, for gowns and petticoats for six poor women. The proceeds of some of these charities, and the surplus of others, are distributed in bread, coals, &c., to the poor. For sustaining and repairing the church Thomas Cranwell left, in 1504, three acres of land, called Smith's Mead ; and in 1505 John Swerdera or Swarder, a goldsmith of London, left nearly seventeen acres in Potter-street, to relieve the poor from taxes, or repair the church ; the proceeds of the two bequests, £61., are applied to the repairs, &c. of the church.

LATTON adjoins the parish of Harlow ; in fact, it includes that part popularly known as Harlow Bush Common ; and it runs to the county boundary, the Stort. The parish seems, from the circumstances connected with it, to have been in ancient times more populous and important than at present. Its name implies

that it was once large enough to be dignified with the title of a town—a sort of new settlement then formed on lands freshly redeemed from the forest. Its priory, and its old manor-house of Merks—the home of various powerful families—must, too, have made it a place of some consequence. These two latter are now its chief points of interest. We behold the ruins of the one as left by the religious earthquake. The grounds and park of the other still flourish green and beautiful. The dark heavy rooms and rude gables of the old house have been transformed by the wand of modern taste into an elegant mansion, one of the ornaments of this portion of the county, which is now the residence of the Rev. J. Arkwright, the lord of the neighbouring domain.

The history which has come down to us of the priory is somewhat confused. The exact date of its foundation is unknown, but the records show that it must have been previous to 1270. Its endowments are also matter of doubt. The lands of Latton manor, which it seems to have possessed, belonged originally to the abbot of St. Edmund's Bury. But they were by some means passed to this as an independent priory, together with the rents of Harlow Bury, till they were appropriated to the abbot's table, probably as a bribe to induce him to loosen some hold he had of the priory; for, says the old historian, "from that time we hear no more of the abbot here." The house never appears to have enjoyed much celebrity, or to have been very attractive to devotees, as the records show that on several occasions there were not sufficient canons under the statutes to elect their chief, and the bishop of London nominated the prior. The last prior was John Taylor; and the possessions of the house then consisted of 200 acres of arable, the like number of pasture, 30 of meadow, 10 of wood, and £8. rent; with the advowson and patronage of the church. These lands, it is believed, are those which lie partly adjacent to the high road leading to Epping. At the suppression, the priory was granted to Sir Henry Parker, and was afterwards in the possession of the Altham family; but was long since re-united to the manor, and is now the property of the Rev. J. Arkwright. Part of the buildings still remain, but not in a state of unproductive ruin. The monastery church is applied to the unromantic purpose of a barn: the ripe wheat-sheaf has taken the place of the cowed monks, and the husbandman plies his flail at the foot of the altar where the prior prayed. It appears to have been a noble building, erected in the form of a cross, with fine arches and windows of free-stone.

The mansion and manor of Marks Hall took their name, like

other places in the county, from Adelloff de Mero, who held them under the Earl of Boulogne. The old house was demolished, and the present structure raised, in the last century, by Sir William Lushington, who expended £80,000. upon it, and afterwards sold it to Montagu Burgoyne, Esq., who fifty years ago was active in the county as a politician and a patriot, having frequently contested the representation, and he raised a crack regiment of cavalry to assist in defending the country in the exigences of the French war. The estate was purchased in 1819, at the price of 100,000 guineas, by Richard Arkwright, Esq., the father of the present possessor.

The church, which was some years since restored and beautified by the Rev. J. Arkwright, stands on a pleasant hill near the hall. It is dedicated to the Virgin, and contains various monuments to the Altham family, on the most ancient of which, against the south wall of the church, is this inscription—

“Here lieth buried the body of James Altham, Esq., and lorde of this towne, who died Feb. 28, 1588, leaving behind him Ladie Judd, his wife, who was some time wife of Sir Andrew Judd, of London, knt.”

Upon the chancel floor are the effigies of a man and a woman, and beneath is the following to the memory of one who probably prepared this record of himself during life, and afterwards laid his bones elsewhere, or left behind no kindred or friendly hand to fill up the blanks :—

“Here lieth buried the body of Emanuall Woolloye, gent., and Margaret his wife; the which Emanuall departed this life the                      day of                      An. 16 being at the age of                      years.”

On the north side of the chancel is a chantry chapel, built by Sir Peter Arden, a judge in the time of Henry VI., who, with his wife, lies buried beneath its arch; and it was further endowed by Brian Rouclyffe, a Baron of the Exchequer in 1476. There is still in the church the confessional, in which the penitents knelt in Roman Catholic times, and whispered their sins into the ear of the parish priest.

NETTSWELL — THE PARNDONS—ROYDON.—Now that we have gained this eminence we can look down upon the living map of the remaining parishes in this direction. There, beyond Latton, stretching on the south to Ongar Hundred, is the little parish of Nettswell, once part of the possessions bestowed by Harold on Waltham Abbey, but of which Charles Phelips, Esq., is now lord;\* and yonder, away to the south-west, lie

\* There is a free-school in Netteswell, for 20 children, founded in 1711, by William Marten, who left the master's house and half an acre of garden, and endowed the school with £1,000, which has been invested in £1,168. 9s. 3d. Three per Cent. Consols. Two almshouses have been converted into an infant school. The poor have 10s. a-year from E. Woolley's charity.



Great and Little Parndon, the latter one of the smallest parishes in the county. Great Parndon could once boast its monastery, which was founded here in the twelfth century by Roger and Robert de Perendune, for canons of the Premonstratensian order; and the manor which they owned, now belonging to the Earl of Mornington, still bears the ecclesiastical designation of Canons. These monks of Perendune, as they were called—this being the way in which the name of the parish was then spelt—did not, however, find the situation to their taste, or they were lured by more tempting offers elsewhere, as in 1180 they deserted their dwelling near the Stort and migrated to the banks of the Blackwater, there founding, or assisting to found, the abbey of Beeleigh, at Maldon. They carefully carried off with them the title deeds of the property at Parndon, which was confirmed to them by Richard I., under their new character; and thereafter the abbot of Beeleigh is found letting and leasing these lands. The monastery itself, however, was demolished, and with the materials a magnificent house was built, in which Sir Richard Farmer dwelt in the seventeenth century; but it was afterwards sold to Sir Richard Child, through whom it passed to the Tilney family, and a great part of the mansion was pulled down. Jerounds, with two-thirds of the rectory, belongs to Christ's and St. Thomas's Hospitals, having been granted to them by Edward VI., into whose hands it had come in 1558. There is a charity for the poor of £5. a-year out of Mead Moor Meadow, which was purchased with £100. left in 1589, by John Celeye or Sealy. Anciently 1s. 8d. was payable to the poor out of River Mead, Harlow, but we hear nothing of it in modern times.

The village below is Roydon, with its lands, which chiefly belong to St. Thomas's Hospital and Charles Phelps, Esq., extending along the beautiful valley of the Stort. The manor of the hall, which in 1285 was granted by Henry I. to the Fitzwalters, and afterwards came to the Templars and the Hospitallers, now belongs to Earl Mornington; and J. A. Houbolon, Esq., is lord of Dounes and Nether Halls. Anciently Roydon was a town of some consequence in the district. Five hundred years ago it had its market on Thursdays, and its fair on the 1st and 2nd of August, granted by royal charter in 1290. Nether Hall, too, at the confluence of the Lea and the Stort, was a noble structure, within which beards of nobles wagged over the table of hospitality in the olden time. It was long the residence of the Colt family, one of whom was a witty visitor in the court of Henry VIII.; and its half-ruined gateway tower,

which defied the levelling tools of the workmen when the other parts of the building were demolished, with its lofty turrets, its wainscot arches, and crumbling architectural ornaments, yet attest the former magnificence of the place. In the church are various monumental memorials of the Colt family, the most ancient of which is of the time of Edward IV., on Richard Colt, Esq., who appears to have been employed abroad in the service of the government. There is a free school in the parish, with a house and garden, also endowed with two cottages, a barn, and three and a quarter acres of land, given by John Manning, in 1767; a house and some land were left by an unknown donor for the repair of the church, and the poor have a rent-charge of 6s. 8d. out of Newman's land, left by Robert Adams.

**MATCHING AND SHEERING.**—The part of the Hundred to the north-west of Harlow, running towards Bishop Stortford, still retains to some extent its forestal character. Starting on our pilgrimage in this direction we leave Matching, which runs up to Ongar Hundred, about four miles on the right. J. T. Selwin, Esq., is lord of the Hall, the chief manor, and Ovesham, once a hamlet, in which in former times stood a chapel endowed with twenty-one acres of land. The great tithes and the patronage of the vicarage are vested in the feoffees of Felsted school, as part of the endowment given by Sir Richard Rich. Sheering, long the property of the Fitz-Walter family, lies directly in our pathway; and yonder, delightfully situate above the vale of the Stort, about a mile from the church, we see the roof of the chief mansion of the parish—Dorrington Hall, built by Samuel Feake, Esq., about 1770, and now the property of T. C. Glyn, Esq., the lord of the manor. With its gardens and tasteful grounds it is the meet home of a country gentleman. A free-chapel anciently stood about a quarter of a mile from the church: it was founded about 1278 by Christiana de Valoines, who dedicated it to St. Nicolas, and endowed it with lands of the annual value of £11. 6s. 8d., for two chaplains to celebrate mass for the king. The spot where it stood, on the road to Netherton, is still called Chapel Field, but not a brick of the structure has been seen above ground for a century. There is a free school in the parish for twelve poor children, endowed with the dividends of £105 New Three-and-a-half per Cent. Stock, left in 1815, by the Rev. F. Tutte.

**HATFIELD BROAD OAK.**—Seven miles from Harlow we enter Hatfield Broad Oak, the most extensive parish in the hundred, and in the olden times a market town of some importance. In

the reign of Edward VI. it was described as "a great and populous town," and a writer towards the close of the last century says—

"The town, till very lately, made such a considerable figure in maps that a company of soldiers have frequently been quartered in it upon a march; who, to their great surprise, found only three ale-houses in it, and those but mean ones."

Here, on the very entrance of the parish, at Holsted Hill—a corruption of Old-street Hill—not long since could be distinctly traced the ruins of deserted houses and the foundations of buildings, extending for half a mile by the road side—the wreck, no doubt, of the town to which the old records allude. The causes of this decay it is now difficult to trace. War does not appear to have devastated nor pestilence to have smitten it; but all the traveller will now find is a small village of little traffic and less trade. Its market has departed, even from the traditions of its inhabitants; and the only shred of commerce left is its lamb fair, held on the 5th of August, and still a mart of some importance amongst the agriculturists of the district and the dealers of neighbouring counties. The parish is now divided into four quarters—the town, consisting of the village; Woodrow; the heath—which, as its name implies, includes an extensive common; and Broomsend quarter. The latter extends four miles to the north, and before the enclosing spade had been so actively plied, included a large tract of open woodland, all that remained of the once extensive forest of Hatfield, within which stood "the Doodle-oke," close to the line of Stane-street, the highway by which the Romans crossed the then wild scene; but this, and the other noble trees which gave half its name to the parish, and for one of which Sir J. Barrington in the last century refused a hundred guineas, have fallen beneath the blows of time and the axe. Hatfield was in early time a royal demesne attached to the crown; it belonged to Edward the Confessor; it was possessed by Harold; it was in the hands of the Conqueror at the time of the survey; and the chief manor of Hatfield Bury remained vested in the sovereign till the time of Edward III. (1217), when it was granted to William de Cassingham, the tithes having been previously given by Henry I. to the priory of St. Botolph, Colchester. It was afterwards in the possession of the Bruces, of Scotland (Robert Brus, as he appears in the records of the parish), who in gaining a kingdom lost this estate, which, after passing through the Earls of Bohun, Thomas of Woodstock, and others, was granted to Lord Rich. From this family it passed to the Barringtons, who had been seated at old Barring-

ton Hall (now a farm-house) from the time of Henry I.\* This family dated back their genealogy to the days of Ethelred, the father of Edward the Confessor, when they appear to have had the custody of the chace or forest here—a right which they possessed in various subsequent reigns, and the name frequently appears in the rolls of parliament from 1330 as representatives of the county. The name of this old family, however, which at one period had shot out its branches to various parts of the shire, has perished from the county in the course of the present century. Its ancient dwelling-place, which stood a mile and a half from the church, is down; and new Barrington Hall was erected about a hundred years ago by J. Barrington Shales, a new scion grafted on the old stock. It afterwards went to Sir Fitzwalter Barrington, and on his death in 1832 was inherited in the female line by Mr. Selby Lowndes; by him it was sold to Mr. Thomas Lowndes, who left it with the estates in 1840 to his cousin, G. A. Lowndes, Esq., the present possessor. The Hall is a fine structure of red brick; and its "long room," on the ground floor, one hundred feet long by twenty in width, was stated to be unequalled in any private dwelling in the county; but this has been pulled down. The mansion was planned and commenced on a scale of liberal grandeur; but it was executed with a feeble and hesitating hand. Eighty years ago many of the rooms were found unfinished—one of them is so now; its partly-built chapel was in ruins; and defacing neglect was everywhere sweeping over it. Since then it has been rendered a comfortable dwelling; the finished part is now in good repair; and G. A. Lowndes, Esq., the lord of the parish, who is residing temporarily at Gladwyns, in Harlow, intends to make the Hall again the family home.

THE PRIORY, which stood near the church, was founded by Alberic de Vere, in 1185, for black canons, and was dedicated to God, St. Mary, and St. Melanius Redonensis, a British or Armorican saint. The effigy, in wood, of the third Earl of Oxford, in armour, and crossed legged, lies in the chancel of the parish church—having been removed, it is said, from the chapel of the priory. From this, and the epitaph in old French, Weever concluded he was the founder of the monastery; and

\* Thomas Barrington, who was sheriff of Essex in 1451, died on the 5th of April, 1472; his wife died the next day; and a poet of that time wrote—

"He first deceased, she for a few hours try'd  
To live without him, like'd it not, and dy'd."

From this the epitaph in Margaretting church, noticed in page 216, is evidently pilfered.

upon his authority the following record was hung up in the sacred edifice:—

“Robert de Vere, the third earl of Oxford, and great chamberlain of England, about the beginning of the reign of king Henry III. founded a priory of black monks in Hatfield-Regis, or Bradoke, valued at the suppression at £157. 3s. 2d. per annum. He was first interred in a chapel of his own foundation, and at the dissolution removed into the quire of St. Paul's church, where he lieth cross-legged, with an inscription, the English of which is :

“Robert de Vere, the first of the name, and Earl of Oxford, lyeth here. God have mercy on his soul. Whoever shall pray for his soul shall have forty days' pardon. He died in 1220.

“Which priory Aubre de Vere, the third of that christian name, Earl of Oxford, enfeoffed with the tythes of this town, and to the instrument of his donation he affixed by a harp string, as a label to the bottom of the parchment, a short black-hafted knife, like unto an old halfpenny whittle, instead of a seal.”

It was subsequently, however, discovered, from charters found at the former seat of the family, at Earls Colne, that the priory was founded by the father of the first Earl, who seems to have made it a cell to the abbey at Rennes, and that the third earl only augmented the revenues and made it independent. The De Veres were from the foundation to the dissolution the patrons of the priory; and the endowments of the institution consisted of 101 acres of land in the parish, with the manor of Prices and its appendant demesne, and part of the tithes, the impropriate tithes of Great Canfield, Helions Bumpstead, Thundersley, Manuden, and Farnham, portions of those of Ulting and Sible Hedingham, with other property in Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire, the whole revenues being valued at the suppression at £157. 3s. 2½d. This was the provision for nine monks, to which the number in the house was limited. After the reformation the priory and its revenues were granted by Henry VIII.—confirmed by Queen Mary—to Thomas Noke, whose son sold them, in 1564, to the Barringtons, and thenceforth it became their residence. The house was at last demolished by mistake. Decay had touched it; and Sir Charles Barrington having consulted a workman as to the propriety of taking it down, that busy personage, misunderstanding his orders, set the pick to work and demolished it in his master's absence. When Sir Charles returned he found his hearth-stone open to the winds and himself shelterless,—a very unpleasant position for a gentleman after his travels. This blunder led to the erection of New Barrington Hall.

Down Hall, three miles south-west of the church, is built on a rising ground with a little brook winding along the front in the valley below,—just such a scene as the muse would

love to nestle in. And it has been the home of a genuine poet. Matthew Prior long dwelt here, the hall having been granted him for life by that liberal patron of literature, Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, who raised plantations, out vistas through the neighbouring woods, and rendered it an elegant retreat, wherein the gifted poet might wander in communion with nature and the muse. About a century ago the estate was purchased by William Selwin, Esq., a merchant; and the house is now the dwelling of J. T. Selwin, Esq., his descendant. The other manorial manors—Broomhill, bordering upon High Roothing; Ballingtons (or the Rye), the Lea, and Matching Barns,\* have become farm-houses; but some of them have still traces of the ancient moats, which were formed for defence of the inmates, and a place of security for the cattle of the tenants, which on the approach of an enemy sought shelter here till the country could be roused by the kindling of the beacon fires.

The church which stands close to the town, is a fine and lofty fabric of ancient date; one of the vestries has, it is believed, been part of the priory chapel, but the sacred edifice is now in good preservation, having been thoroughly restored fourteen or fifteen years ago. In the chancel lies the effigy in wood of Robert de Vere, before referred to, with the crossed-legs of the crusader. Here, too, are the vault and some monuments of the Barrington family; and amongst the modern inscriptions on the walls is the following to Thos. Lowndes, Esq., of Barrington Hall, who died in Kent, Nov., 1840, aged 75:—

“Of what avails the greatest wealth,  
Of many years of vigorous health—  
Of what avail high worth or station  
With all the pleasures in creation,  
When unto dust the body turns,  
And life's bright lamp no longer burns?  
Then learn from him who here doth lie  
The loss of life's scarce worth a sigh.  
Weak must he be and strongly err,  
Who does not Heaven to earth prefer.

“The above lines, written many years ago by Mr. Lowndes, and intended for his own monumental inscription, are at his particular desire inscribed on this tablet.”

There was a chantry here, it is believed in Broad-street, founded by Walter Percival and Robert Hanbury, to secure prayers for their souls, and endowed with lands in Matching, Prittlewell, and other parishes in Rochford Hundred, valued at the suppression at £7. 13s. 4d., which were granted away by Edward VI., in

\* Undoubtedly part of that farm was originally in Matching, though the whole may have been invaded by the adjoining parish of Hatfield, most parishes being too guilty of stealing from one another, and the largest one commonly the greatest thieves.—*Morant*.

1548. Two district churches have recently been erected in the parish by public subscription, and the ready aid of the manorial lords,—one at “The Heath,” an outlying division towards Sheering, the other at “The Bush,” at the northern extremity. G. A. Lowndes, Esq., gave land for the first, besides £100., and a site for the erection of a school: J. A. Houblon, Esq., the possessor of the ancient forest lands, ceded a spot for the second; and these gentlemen respectively, with the pious spirit which influenced our ancestors in these matters, have further charged their lands, the first with the payment of £30. and the other of £60. a year; while Trinity College, Cambridge, gives £60., so as to secure £75. for each minister.

The church property, part of which is believed to have been given by the Earl of Oxford, consists of Bridge Foot Farm, of 86A. 1R. 86P.; three other closes of 9A. 2R. 12P.; and £650. in consols. The charity property consists of Brands’ land, 16A. 1R. 87P.; five other fields in the parish, containing 14A.; 7A. 18P. in White Roothing,—£5. of the produce being applied to the highways, and the remainder to the National Schools and for clothing the poor; out of Gallilands, 8s. is paid for a sermon, and £2. 16s. for a distribution of bread, under the will of John Franck.\* Besides these, John Gobert left £4. out of Keers farm, Aythorp Roothing, for bread; Thomas Cheveley in 1690, left 8 acres of land on Change common, for six of the poorest labouring men; 12 aged widows have £1. 10s. out of Braintrees farm; the Barrington alms-houses near the church are occupied by five poor widows; and there are five cottages occupied by poor families rent free.

THE HALLINGBURYS.—Directing our steps to the north-east corner of the hundred, through a woodland and picturesque country, part of it till recently forming the remnant of the forest of Takely, which the hedge and ditch and draining spade of the encloser have of late years obliterated, we reach the Hallingburys, Great and Little. Their lands, like others along this tract, rise boldly from the vale of the Stort, and present to the traveller fine border views in Essex and Herts. Yonder, at the distance of two miles and a half, is the town of Bishops Stortford, in the latter county, with its new church and its Diocesan Training School at Hockerill; and nearer to us on this fine eminence stands the stately mansion of Great Hallingbury Hall, with its well-wooded park and its fine sheet of water, the subject farm-houses dotting the living map around, in the midst of dark game-covers and well cultivated fields. With the beautiful rural scene of to-day, too, there is mingled a feeling of olden interest. Here the Roman planted his foot



and raised his bulwarks, to protect the province he had won. The works of the imperial warriors are yet to be traced on the precipice above the Stort; and at Wallbury is the site of an extensive fortified camp. The name of the locality in the time of Edward I. was written Alynbyr; and Dr. Salmon considers that here was the Aluana Silva of Ravennas. The description, he contends, suits very well with the forest of Essex and the neighbourhood of London. "Here," he adds, "are about thirty acres double-ditched, very little defaced. The precipice on the north has some additional work on the brow of the hill. Whether this be Aluana or not it stands upon the road used from London to St. Edmund's Bury in Edward the Confessor's time." It has been stated that large numbers of the coins of Cunobeline were found here; but Mr. Frye, of Saffron Walden, made inquiries, and could not learn that anything of the kind had been discovered.\* Great Hallingbury was called Hallingbury-Morley, from the family of Morley, who became possessed of it in 1316, and were long its lords. This family was of considerable repute in the public affairs of the country. Lord Morley, who lies buried in the church, was one of those who signed the celebrated threatening letter to Pope Clement VI. The name of Lord Morley is amongst those who passed judgment of death on Mary Queen of Scots; and to another of them, who took the title of Lord Monteagle, the nation was indebted for the discovery of the gunpowder plot. The estate afterwards passed to the Turner family, having been purchased by Sir Edward, who was member for the county in 1660, Speaker of the House of Commons, and afterwards Lord Chief Baron. In 1727, in accordance with the will of his son, an act of parliament passed for the sale of these manors for the payment of his debts, and they were purchased by Jacob Houblon, Esq., belonging to a family which had been eminent as merchants in London, and had shared largely in civic honours. The founder of the house appears to have been James Houblon, merchant, who in 1620 married Mary Du Cane, and amongst their children were Sir James Houblon, Knt., alderman of London, and one of its parliamentary representatives in 1698; and Sir John Houblon, Knt., alderman, the first Governor of the Bank of England, Lord Mayor, and one of the Commissioners of the Admiralty. Jacob, the son of the purchaser of this estate, married the daughter of John Archer, Esq., of Coopersale, and thus the name of Archer-Houblon has become settled amongst our Essex families. John Archer-Houblon, Esq., is the present resident of Hallingbury-Hall, the ancient

\* *Sepulchra Exposita*, by Lord Braybrooke.

seat of the Morleys; but the mansion was nearly re-built in 1771, and has since been greatly improved.

The manor of Wallbury, named from the Roman vallum before noticed, and Monkbury, so called on account of its having been given by Eudo Dapifer to the monks of St. John's Abbey, at Colchester, also belong to J. A. Houblon, Esq. The first of these manors was held in 1211 by Walter de Hanvil, by the service of being the king's falconer. In the reign of Henry III. it was in the possession of Roger de Ross, his majesty's tailor, and, as if to shut him out from the pale of the aristocracy, and fix upon him the mark of the cross-legged craft, the fantastic condition of the tenure was that he should pay a silver needle yearly into the Exchequer.

The church is a handsome little building, kept in excellent order; and in the north wall of the chancel is found a tomb, with six brass plates containing Latin inscriptions to members of the Morley family, the earliest date being 1440. On the south side is the tomb of Sir Edward Turner, but without an epitaph. The charities of the parish consist of the interest of £20, left by some benevolent unknown to be distributed amongst the labourers; and a rent-charge of 14s. for the poor, out of an estate near Tile-kiln Green.

Little Hallingbury was a place of some manufacturing activity in the last century. A mill for the twisting and winding of silk was then in full operation, affording profitable employment for a large number of women and girls; but the clatter of its cogs is now hushed and the village has subsided into rural quietude. The manor was part of the possessions of Suen, and after passing to the Bohuns, Staffords, Bouchiers, and Earls of Essex, was purchased by Thomas Sutton, Esq., the founder of the Charterhouse, his first intention being to raise here that noble institution, which has given to England some of its greatest sons in statesmanship, divinity, literature, and art. The field south of the manor-house was the spot selected on which to raise the walls of this national nursery of talent. This intention was, however, abandoned ere a brick had been laid, and the institution was planted in the heart of the metropolis, but the manor and rectory were given to swell its wealth and feed its usefulness; and they still remain part of the possessions of this splendid charity.

## Waltham Half-Hundred.

This little hundred lies at the western corner of the county, where it is bounded by the river Lea, and joins on the other sides the hundreds of Harlow and Ongar. From north to south it is about 10 miles; its breadth at the widest part is only six miles, which is narrowed in some places to two; and it contains only these four parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Waltham Holy Cross .....	A miraculous cross, or the cross of Queen Eleanor..... Upping, or upper pasture..... The Saxon word <i>Nase</i> , a promontory, and <i>ing</i> , a meadow The Saxon <i>Cing</i> or King, and <i>ford</i> —the Kings-ford.....	10876	4503	23234	*	
Epping .....		5231	2255	12500	400 0 0	300 0 0
Nasing .....		3893	757	6077		235 0 0
Chingford .....		2766	963	6027	515 0 0	

\* Waltham is a denotive tithing, valued in 1851 at £237.

Though small in extent, the hundred was of considerable importance in old times, as the seat of the great Abbey of Waltham, and the scene through which kings and courtiers, issuing from the neighbouring hunting-palace of Chigwell, were seen, following the stag through the forest glades. Even now a wild open tract stretches to the eastward, overrun by the hornbeam and the bramble, with occasional clumps of timber and thick wood, within which not even a stray stag is found; and the whole appears to be waiting for the clearing axe and the enclosing spade. In monkish times the forest lands hereabout had the reputation of being a favourite promenade of evil visitors from the other world; but the rule of the dark vale and the wood was shared by beings of more substantial shape—the Waltham Blacks, as they were designated, from the blacking their faces—a sort of lawless community of Robin Hoods, with a deeper touch of vulgar felony in their composition, since they descended to wood-stealing, and did not object to a sheep if their shot missed the deer. The poet has thus sketched a night scene in the locality:—

“ Deep in the forest’s dreary tracks,  
Where ranged at large fierce Waltham Blacks,  
There passengers with wild affright  
Shrunk from the horrors of the night;  
Where o’er the marsh false meteors beam,  
And glow-worms in the bushes gleam;  
There, through the woods, o’er meadows dank,  
The merry devils frisk and prank.”

It was maliciously asserted that the goblin tales were propagated by the monks, to cover and keep prying eyes away from their nocturnal visits to the fair sisters at the nunnery of Cheshunt; and Fuller, in his "Church History," tells of a merry trick played upon the good fathers by one of the Colt family, at a time when friars were getting into disrepute, and unwonted liberties might be taken with their privileged persons:—

"Sir Henry Colt," says he, "of Nether Hall, in Essex, much in favour with King Henry VIII. for his merry conceits, came late one night to Waltham Abbey, where, being informed by his setters that some of the monks of Waltham were harboured in Cheshunt nunnery, he pitched a buck stall in the narrowest part of the meadow or marsh, where they were to pass over, leaving some of his confederates to watch the same, and enclosed them as they were returning in the dark to their convent. He brought and presented them next morning to the king, who said he had often seen sweeter but never fatter venison."

The muse, too, has added an anecdote of the kind of ghost that walked the marsh, in the account of the escape of the Lady Millisent from the neighbouring nunnery:—

"Behold a maid still fearless rove,  
Fair Millisent, the child of love;  
From Cheston's dome she wanders darkling,  
Array'd in white, her eye-beams sparkling;  
Astound, the curate and mine host,  
Exclaim that they have seen a ghost!  
Yet Munchensey does soon discover  
She's mortal to her favoured lover."

The ghosts appear to have left the scene in disgust after the suppression of the religious houses. The Waltham Blacks maintained their lawless footing for centuries after. In the time of George I. a special statute was passed to suppress them, making the blacking their faces and wearing disguises felony, without any other act. A remnant of them, however, was found hiding and hovering round Copt Hall, when it was rebuilt in 1753; but J. Conyers, Esq., by providing them cottages, assigning them land, and employing them in the enclosure and cultivation of wastes, succeeded in reclaiming and civilizing the outlaws.

WALTHAM ABBEY is a small but ancient and interesting town, in the lowlands of the Lea. It is divided into four wards—Waltham, Holyfield, Sewardstone, and Upshire, with Galley and Mangham Hills. The latter are occupied by the government powder mills and magazines, which also extend in detached branches three or four miles along the little islands of the marsh lands. The name of King Harold has generally been associated with the establishment of Waltham, and he was the first who brought it into prosperity and repute. He founded the Abbey; and it was at its altar he knelt to offer up

his last prayer when he went forth to meet his death at the hand of the Norman. It was in this spot that his body found a tomb when it was brought from the battle-field. But pioneers had been at work here before the time of Harold. In the early ages the waters of the Lea, and the tide flowing up from the Thames, formed here a broad estuary; and in 876 some of the ships of the Danish spoilers lay at anchor in the waters, which then covered yonder rich marsh and meadow lands, where we now behold cattle peacefully grazing, or the mower busy with his scythe. These vessels had sent forth hordes which were ravaging the country around and further inland, when King Alfred, by an adroit use of the spade, cut and diverted the feeding streams of the Lea, and left the ships upon dry land, thus compelling the crews to abandon their plunder and save themselves by an overland flight. Blackwall, too, was raised by the same monarch, to shut out the inundating flow of the tide; some of the lands were drained; and about a century and a half afterwards, Tovi, a rich Saxon, standard bearer to the Danish King, Canute, found it so fertile and fair a spot, with the forest round about so thickly stocked with deer, that he built a number of houses—the nucleus of the future Waltham—and settled a colony of sixty inhabitants upon it. He also founded a church for two priests; and, says the page of olden history, “committed to their keeping a miraculous cross, said to have been discovered in a vision to a carpenter far westward, and brought hither in a manner unknown, which was reported to work many wonders; and, on account of that cross, this place attained the name of Holy-Cross”—though, perhaps, some may be disposed to think the appellation was derived from the beautiful memorial cross, the defaced remnants of which stand just over the border, in Hertfordshire, erected in 1291, to mark one of the resting places of the body of Queen Eleanor, on its way from Lincoln. The son of Tovi, however, had little of his father's thrift. By means akin to the gaming table and the turf he scattered his patrimony, and Waltham, coming to the crown, Edward the Confessor gave it to Earl Harold, on condition that he should “build a monastery in the place, where was a little convent, subject to the canons and their rulers, and furnish it with all necessary relics, dresses, and ornaments, in memory of Edward and his wife Edith.” Accordingly, in 1062, a college for a dean and eleven secular canons was founded, and in time it became endowed with a large part of the property of the hundred, with lands, advowsons, tithes, and manors in various parts of this and other counties, though the Conqueror appears to have stripped them of most of the lands

in Waltham given them by Harold. Its character of a college was maintained for little more than a century. Rome, at this period, began to entertain some jealousy of the secular orders; and branding them with irreligion and looseness of life, it was resolved to supplant them wherever possible by regular monks. Henry II. took advantage of this feeling. He had made a pious vow to build an abbey as an act of expiation for the murder of Thomas à Becket; and he contrived to do it at a cheap rate, and compromise with his conscience and the Pope, by changing the dean of Waltham into an abbot, and replacing the secular canons by sixteen Augustine monks. This was in 1177. The abbey, as rich in privileges as in possessions, continued to flourish till the Reformation. It had been from its foundation a chapel royal. It was independent of all bishops, and yielded obedience to none save the pope and the king. The chief was one of the twenty-eight mitred abbots of the kingdom; and he had a house in London for his residence when he went to court. He had often, too, the king for a neighbour or guest. Henry III., especially, often made Waltham his place of residence, and to compensate the inhabitants for the high prices occasioned by his presence, he granted them a weekly market and a seven days' fair. The abbey continued 862 years under a succession of 27 abbots; and at last, close by its walls, tradition says a thought was hatched and presented to the mind of Henry VIII. which had a great influence in bringing about the Reformation, and with it the destruction of this and the other conventual establishments. "The king," so runs the tale, "had a small house on Rome-land, a parcel of land near the abbey, so called from having been granted by Henry II. to Pope Alexander, to which he occasionally resorted for his private amusement, as may be inferred from Fuller, who says, 'Waltham bells told no tales when the king came there.' He took this place in his way when he commenced a journey to dissipate the chagrin he felt from the obstructions to his divorce from Queen Catharine. Stephen Gardiner, his Secretary of State, and Edward Fox, his almoner, by whom he was accompanied, spent the evening at the house of Mr. Cressy, to whose sons Dr. Cranmer was preceptor. As the divorce became the subject of conversation, Cranmer observed that the readiest way to quiet the king's conscience, or to extort the pope's consent, would be to consult the universities of Europe on this controverted point. If they approved of his marriage with Catharine his remorse would naturally cease; if they condemned it the pope would find it difficult to resist the solicitations of so great a monarch, seconded by the opinion of all the learned men in

Christendom. When the king was informed of this proposal he was delighted with it, and with more alacrity than delicacy swore that Cranmer had got the right sow by the ear." He sent for that divine, adopted his opinion, and ever after entertained for him the highest regard. Mr. Cressy's house, where this transaction occurred, has long since been entirely unknown.

Robert Fuller, the last abbot, a man of some literary pretensions, wrote a history of the abbey. He surrendered his estate and trust to Henry VIII. in March, 1540, the revenues of the abbey then amounting to £1,079. 12s. 1d.—showing it to have been the richest in Essex. The site of the monastery, Waltham Park, and much of the property of the house in the district, were granted to Sir Anthony Denny, a favourite gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber. It was afterwards sold to Sir William Jones, from whom it passed to the Wake family,—and Sir Charles Wake is the present lord. The site of the abbey is now a market garden. After the expulsion of the monks, a part of the buildings appears to have been turned into a lordly dwelling; and a writer of nearly a century ago thus describes it:—

"The Abbey was a curious, large, and antique structure: the whole front a few years ago was entirely rebuilt with brick and stone, after a modern and beautiful form, by Charles Wake Jones, Esq., and on each side the front it had a wing. The hall was exceedingly handsome by reason of the curious wainscoting and extraordinary paintings; in length it measured sixteen yards and a half; in breadth eight yards and a half; and in height nine yards and one foot. It was encompassed with many fertile pastures, and pleasant meads and marshes. The spacious garden belonging to it was surrounded by a beautiful canal; the garden was really delightful, in which were plants, fruits, groves, walks, and in short everything that was necessary to render it agreeable. But above all the tulip tree must not be forgot, which is esteemed the largest and biggest that ever was seen. It blows with innumerable flowers in the months of June and July, which tree alone is left of its ornaments, and is encompassed by a paling. The house was pulled down in 1770."

"As with noiseless step," observed an enthusiastic writer, as he wandered amidst roofless arches and broken columns, "we pace over the turf that shrouds the stones worn by the tread of worshippers whose chants once trembled and echoed through the lofty arches, an ecstasy at this blending of the past and present—of old antiquity and the ever-living and working spirit of nature—by turns transports the mind and keeps us lingering as on charmed ground." Something of this feeling moves us as we traverse the spot where once stood the abbey. Nearly all, however, is here left to the imagination. We look around for the traces of past magnificence, and we find only this battered and time-worn gateway, through which the lordly abbots rode and the royal visitors entered; the side-wall of the gate-house, with one octagonal tower; a bridge



which leads to it; and a few lumps of dilapidated south wall, with the groined building at the west end. We turn to the monastery church, now the place of parish worship, and inquire for Harold's tomb, which should be somewhere hereabouts—as we learn from history, that after the stern Conqueror, who at first refused christian burial to his slain foe, had yielded to the intercessions made to him by his mother and two of the religious of this abbey, the corpse, and the bodies of his two brothers, “were brought to Waltham Abbey, attended by a small and dejected number of the English nobility, and with great lamentation solemnly interred.” The tomb, however, is gone. The kingly corpse was laid within the chancel, and over his grave was placed a rich grey marble stone, with the simple words—“Harold Infelix”\*. But the decay of the church and the narrowing of its walls had left it in the open air, full forty yards from the present building; and the last account of it is that it was seen applied to some base and mercenary use at Waltham Mill. The stone coffin itself was turned up long ago by the gardener's spade, the bones, on being touched, crumbling into dust. Thus did Waltham and the lords of the abbey lands fulfil their trust, and guard the spot where Harold slept.

The present parish church is a mutilated remnant of the Abbey Temple. It was originally a large and beautiful cruciform building, for the use of the parishioners as well as the monks; but soon after the surrender it passed wholly to the inhabitants, and a rude hand was laid upon it. The chancel and the choir were demolished; and this brought down part of the tower, which stood cathedral-wise in the middle; the remainder was pulled down; the transept and other parts were swept away; leaving nothing but the west end, which forms the present church. A new tower was begun in 1558, and was finished three years after—the charge being met partly by the produce of the materials of the abbey buildings, partly from the sale of 271 ounces of plate and other property belonging to a brotherhood of the church, which had escaped the first sweep of the confiscation; but in the end the parishioners were so hardly

\* Weever gives an epitaph in barbarous Latin, said to be derived from an ancient manuscript: the translation is as follows, but the epitaph is regarded as apocryphal:—

“A fierce foe thee slew: thou a king; he a king in view,  
Both peers, both peerless, both fear'd and both fearless:  
That sad day was mix't, by Firmin and Calixt;  
The one help'd thee to vanquish, t'other made thee to languish.  
Both now for thee pray, and thy requiem say;  
So let good men all to God for thee call.”

driven to complete the work that they were obliged to dispose of their five bells, which stood in a frame in the church yard. Hence it became a joke that Waltham, which before had steepleless bells, had for years after a belless-steeple. This reproach has since been removed, and the tower has now a peal of eight bells, to send forth the summoning Sabbath chime, or the gay joy notes of the marriage festival. In its splendour the church was dotted round with little chantry chapels. The building on the south, now used as a school, was the chapel of Our Lady; and beneath is a charnel, finely arched, belonging to a guild, then well endowed. There was also St. George's Chapel; and within a little building at the north-east end, long a repository for rubbish, has often been heard the evening chant and the pilgrim prayer. The church itself is now a convenient place of parish worship, kept with care and touched by the restoring hand. Some of the changes that have been made are no doubt incongruous. The glass painting of Harold, the founder, which was formerly seen near the beautiful wooden screen, has been crushed by the hands of the over zealous Puritan. But the worn and mutilated columns, the semi-circular arches, the massive pillars which divide the body from the aisles, and other surviving specimens of the craft of the Norman architect, mingle a mystic interest with the feelings that hover around the sacred edifice. The building is now undergoing restoration—and, freed from its disfiguring gallery, and cleared of its barbarous whitewash and plaster, is likely to re-appear in much of its former beauty. Amongst the monuments is one of some pretension to Sir E. Denny, of the family which became the Lords Denny, of Waltham, erected to him by his wife, "out of meane fortunes but no meane affection;" and the inscription is in general an outpouring of personal regard. Lady Greville, too, lies here entombed; and in the north aisle of the chancel lies Robert Smith, the commander of the "Industrious," who died in 1697, and sleeps with his good ship in full sail, fire arms and cutlasses, strangely mingled with cherubs, carved on the marble above him—a singular perversion of good taste and the sepulchral urn.

The church lands consist of two houses in Sewardstone-street, and 23A. 1R. 7P. of land in Upshire hamlet. There is a good endowment in the parish for educational purposes. For Leverton's school Thomas Leverton left £6,000 Three per Cent. Consols, to be applied as follows:—£80 for clothing twenty boys and girls, £30 to the schoolmaster, £20 to the schoolmistress, £10 for books; £10 for apprenticing two of the children; £5 to five children who behaved well in after

service; and he also directed that £12 should be given to clothe six poor men and six poor women, £5 in bread on Christmas-day, £3 to keep his monument in repair, and £5 for contingencies. The school-house was built in 1824 with money left by George Faubert. John Edmonson gave in 1766 two cottages and a garden for educating poor boys; John Halfhide in 1814 £210 stock for the Sunday schools and poor widows. There are almshouses in Highbridge-street, left in 1626, by — Green, purveyor to James I., for four poor widows; they were rebuilt in 1815 with money left by Robert Mason, and £200. advanced by the parish, and now afford comfortable shelter for eight inmates, four of whom have amongst them £20. a-year from a barn, wharf, and garden left by the original founder—the other four have 2s. 2½d. a week from £1,350 stock, left by Mowbray Woollard in 1826 for this purpose, and also for distributing 1s. per week each to five poor men and five poor women in the workhouse, “to buy snuff or other comforts.” The poor have also 40s. out of Rampston’s charity; 30s. out of the Cock Inn, left by R. Browne in 1587; 20s. left by Robert Catrow in 1597; 40s. out of an estate at Yardley, left by George Weylett in 1691; 40s. out of land at Holyfield, left by Robert Grub in 1708; 10s. left by Robert Dane, and 52s. left by Henry Wollaston, out of Fisher’s farm. The poor of the Abbey division have the dividends of £389. stock, left by Jane Dobson in 1817; and the poor of Sewardstone have a rent-charge of 20s. out of an estate there, left in 1587 by Margaret Gidney, who also gave a similar rent-charge for the repairs of the highways.

CHINGFORD.—As we shake off the thoughts of the monks and the mouldy past, and emerge from the town into the open country, we reach a beautiful, and, as it has been called, a romantic portion of the parish of Waltham—High Beech. It stands on the high grounds of the forest, with its district church, erected in 1836, and its mansions, commanding beautiful prospects, amongst them Beech House, the residence of Richard Arabin, Esq. The village of Chingford is seen on the high lands in the southern angle of the hundred, the Lea dividing it from Edmonton, and the land swelling up into eminences, which afford fine views across Essex into Kent on one side, and of various places in Hertfordshire on the other. A part of the parish is still open forest and woodland. The dwellings of the villagers are scattered like the homes of the first settlers in the wild. Several good mansions and old manor-houses dot the landscape, amongst them those of the Rev. R. Boothby Heathcote, at Friday Hill; the Mount, White Hall, and Mount Echo; and Chingford is

entitled to be ranked with the most pleasant of our Essex rural villages. The chief manor of Chingford St. Paul's, or Chingford Hall, was given by Edward the Confessor to the Cathedral of St. Paul's; and it was held by the Dean and Chapter down to the Reformation. Edward VI. gave it to Sir Thomas D'Arcy; but Mary wrested it from him to confer it on one of the favourite ladies of her bed-chamber, Susan Tongue; and R. Hodgson, Esq. is now the lord. Chingford Earls, or Comitis, in early times the property of the Mountfitchets—and once, as has been seen, of the Earl of Athol, who was butchered for his adhesion to Robert Bruce—belongs to the Rev. R. B. Heathcote. Brindwoods, an estate of about £20. or £30. a year, all our local historians state is held of the rectory by the following quaint old custom; but the present rector assures us he knows nothing of the matter; except what he has seen in print, and that he does not even know where Brindwoods is!—

“Upon every alienation, the owner of the estate, with his wife, man servant, and maid servant, each single on a horse, come to the parsonage, where the owner does his homage, and pays his relief in manner following—he blows three blasts with his horn, carries a hawk on his fist, and his servant has a greyhound in a slip, both for the use of the rector for that day; he receives a chicken for his hawk, a peck of oats for his horse, a loaf of bread for his greyhound. They all dine, after which the master blows three blasts with his horn, and they all depart.”

The old parish church, an ancient structure, being found ill-adapted for the modern wants of the parish, has been deserted for a handsome structure erected in a more central situation on the Green, about seventeen years ago, at a cost of £5,000, at the sole charge of the rector, the Rev. R. B. Heathcote, who is lord of Chingford Earls, and resides in a fine mansion at Friday Hill. The place in which the fathers of the hamlet met in prayer for centuries, stripped of its fittings and overgrown with ivy, is left to silence and solitude, save when some new tenant is added to the dead who sleep around. The charities of the parish consist of the dividends of £400. Three per Cent. Reduced Annuities, left by John, Ann, and Rebecca Popplewell, of Woodford, in 1820, 10s. to be paid to the clerk, and the rest distributed in coals; £3. from Rampston's charity, at Walthamstow, left in 1585; which, with a rent-charge of £3. left by Thomas Boothby, out of Chingford Earls, is given in bread; and the poor widows have from an unknown donor the value of the crop of grass on an acre and three quarters of marsh-land.

NAZING occupies the north-western point of the hundred, separated from Herts. by the Lea—rich marsh lands skirting the river, and the parish rising to the eastward into picturesque

highlands. Park and common intersperse the scene; and the clusters of houses at Nazing Bury, St. Leonard's Green, Long Green, and other points, assume the character of rural hamlets. Most of this parish belonged to Waltham Abbey—Harold's Park, now a farm-house, still retaining the name of its founder, who is said to have slept here the night before the battle of Hastings—and the rectorial income was appropriated to the clothing of a certain number of the monks. Soon after the suppression, the lands, manors, and impropriate rectory were granted away—the advowson of the vicarage, however, still remaining in the crown—and they came to Sir Anthony Denny, in whose family they long remained. A large part of the parish, with the manors of Little Bury and Green Mead Lodge, now belongs to Major Palmer, the patriotic commander of the Essex Yeomanry Corps; and the mansion of Nazing Park, surrounded by pleasant pleasure grounds, gardens, and a well-wooded park, has been the seat of the family for some centuries. An ancestor of the Major, who resided here in 1642, was elected by the freeholders one of the verderers of the Great Forest of Waltham, and he was upon the inquisition of the forest in the eighth year of the reign of Charles I. The parish formed a part of the forest, but was disafforested by the charter of the first year of Richard I. At that time Nazing Wood, or Nazing Park, consisting of 575 acres, was imparked. The manor of Nazing Great Bury is the property of Sir Charles Wake. The Common, of nearly 900 acres, which, with Nazing Mead, and Stone Shot Common, has just been enclosed, had enjoyed the peculiar privilege of being free of the forest laws; and the right of commonage belonged to “the houses built of ancient time,” but the occupants on the 186 acres called the Mead had only a claim to the aftermath. An historian of the last century was unable to discover how it was that 100 acres had become separated from the rest; but we find that in July, 1651, Lord Carlyle, then lord of Nazing, by mutual agreement with the inhabitants, and afterwards by deed, took to himself 100 acres of the 575 alluded to, attaching 50 to Nazing Great Bury Manor, 50 to Nazing Little Bury, with Green Mead Lodge, and vested the other 475 acres absolutely in five trustees and their successors for the sole benefit of the occupants of the 100 ancient houses in the parish. The copyholders possess many valuable and peculiar privileges, amongst others the right to cut and sell timber on their estates without reference to the lords; they have also a right of fishery in the Lea. The church of Nazing is a stately edifice for so small a parish, and

it contains a curious remnant of the religious practices of former days—a small door behind one of the columns of the arches which separate the nave and north aisle opens on a winding stair, which leads to a niche in front of the chancel, large enough to show a person almost at full length; and here it is believed offenders were made to do penance, expiating their crimes against morality by public exposure in the face of the congregation.

**EPPING.**—About six miles to the east-north-east of Waltham Abbey, skirted by the forest to which it gives its name,—

“Sweet sylvan Epping rears its rural head”

from one of the highest eminences of the county, being 360 feet above the level of the sea, and with some of its door steps on a line with the top of St. Paul's, whose towering dome is visible from some points in its precincts in the clear sun light. The parish, which is between thirty and forty miles in circumference, is divided into three quarters—the Town, the Upland, and Ryehill hamlet; and its market is still kept up, though it consists only of a few stalls and a gathering of some twenty neighbouring farmers. The street is nearly a mile in length. It opens upon the forest at either end, and the neighbouring hills and highlands present to the eye beautiful scenes in the surrounding country, the wild and open prairie lands stretching away to the south and the west, waiting for the clearing axe, the draining spade, and the plough, to bring it into the same profitable cultivation as the rich meadows and the fertile arable fields by which it is skirted. The whole, or nearly the whole of this parish, belonged to the abbey at Waltham; and at that time the houses of the town or village appear to have been clustered round the church, which is two miles from the high road, the present street being of comparatively modern date. The ancient way from Harlow to London was from the corner of Wintry Wood, across the forest, to Abridge, the present road being then all but impassable. In 1518, however, John Baker, a mercer of the place, gave part of the proceeds of an estate, called Stowards, in Theydon Garnon, for improving the direct high road; and this local patriotism of a fellow townsman greatly benefited the inhabitants by bringing all the traffic through the place. Its inns multiplied for the accommodation of those frequenting the sporting gatherings at Newmarket and of the students of Cambridge passing to and fro in term and vacation time; till, in the course of the last century, it came to be described as a town “consisting chiefly of inns and public-houses.” Upon this traffic and the fame of its sausages it flourished and grew fat. But, though the rail has drained off



this source of sustaining profit, and the welcome rattling of the busy wheels of the post-chaise and public stage has ceased,—though that well-known hostelry, Epping Place, once the seat of the Conyers' family, has again become a private dwelling, and the town is left to its local trade and rural quietude—it presents outwardly signs of marked improvement within the last 20 years. The old manorial wooden market-house, with its ugly shambles, which so long encumbered the centre of the street, has been swept away ; many of the houses have been improved ; and the fine free chapel, which stands conveniently about the middle of the town, has been rebuilt. This chapel is of very ancient date. It was founded by the monks of Waltham, for the convenience of the tenants of their manor residing in this part of the parish, as the church, which is a fine ancient structure, stands on an eminence two miles to the north-west of the town, in what is called the Upland district. About 1540 we find the abbot making a grant of the chapel to John Pergant, as a free chapel, without cure of souls. It is further recorded that—

“In 1550 King Edward VI. granted it to John Cokks, Esq., with reserve to the inhabitants of the village of Epping Heath of free ingress and regress to and from the said chapel, for the hearing of divine service, as had been accustomed in former times.”

Two years afterwards Cokks conveyed it to Henry Archer and his heirs, with a like reservation, in consideration of which the inhabitants were to keep it in repair. The person who conveyed it to the inhabitants was Christopher Wilkins, and in 1578 it was vested in trustees for public use.

Taking the high road towards London, running partly through the open forest, at about a mile from the town, stands Copt Hall, at present inhabited by the Hon. J. A. Ashley. It is an extensive and nearly square building of white brick, and was the seat of the late H. J. Conyers, Esq., the lord of the parish, whose rough but honest spirit long ruled in the hunting-fields of this district. The traveller sees the mansion on a bold eminence to the right, the land falling from the spot on which he stands to a deep valley, and rising again in plantations and groves, like a succession of wooded terraces, to the park and green lawn on which the hall door opens. The little river Cobbin gurgles away to the north, and just beyond the range of the park, on the south-east side, are Ambersbury Banks, the scene of Boadicea's battle and final defeat. The family of Conyers had been seated here for upwards of a century. It appears to have been of very ancient standing in Yorkshire. Tristram Conyers or Coniers, a gentleman of large wealth, settled at Walthamstow in 1619 ; and this branch became



naturalized as an Essex family. Several of its members were celebrated in the law in that century. Gerard was an alderman of London, and received the honour of knighthood; and Edward, then sitting in Parliament for East Greenstead, bought the manor of Epping and Copt Hall of Lord North about 1728. This estate was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Thomas Hennage, the treasurer of her chamber and vice-chamberlain of her household, who erected a gallery at the mansion 56 yards long; subsequently it had been in the possession of the Earls of Winchelsea and the Lords Grey; and in 1753 John Conyers, Esq., who then resided at Epping Place, found the house in dilapidation and decay. Time had loosened the foundation; a hurricane had torn down the state gallery; so the ancient chapel was stripped of a beautiful painted glass window, obtained from New Hall, and believed to have been originally painted for Henry VIII.'s chapel, which was sold to adorn the chancel of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and the whole pile was demolished. The present mansion was erected between 1753 and 1757, on a new site, in the parish of Epping, the old one having stood a little to the west, in Waltham; and, improved as it has since been by the hand of a Wyatt, it is described by a topographical writer as "one of the principal ornaments of the county."

The charities of the parish consist of the estates before noticed, left by John Baker to Epping and Theydon Garnon. The proceeds are divided; when no repairs are required at the farm-house £20 is laid out in the repair of the highway; the other is distributed amongst the poor; the sum received on felling Redyn's wood is applied to repairing and beautifying the church; and the dividends of £145. 13s. 4d. Three per Cent. Reduced Annuities, purchased with an accumulated surplus, are appropriated to apprenticing poor children. Of the rent of Searle's farm, Harlow, purchased with £400 left by Lady Wentworth, in 1688, £2 is paid to the vicar for a sermon, and the remainder distributed in sums of 3s. 6d. each to widows and the poor. Edward Searle, in 1688, left a rent-charge of 52s. out of Gibbons Bush farm, which is given away in bread; the interest of £100 Three per Cent. Consols, left by Elizabeth Walkley in 1813, is distributed in coals to twelve poor widows; of £7. 10s. received from Reynold's charity, £1 is paid for a sermon, 5s. to the sexton and bell-ringer, and the rest, together with half the proceeds of Campion's charity, is distributed amongst the poor having the largest families. In 1832 Ann Chapman left £300 Three per Cent. Consols for the distribution of bread, meat, coals, or clothing amongst eight poor widows.

## Chafford Hundred.

This Hundred is a long and narrow strip of land, strangely intersected and intermixed, as if marked out at random on the map, extending thirteen miles from Brentwood, in a southerly direction, to the Thames at Grays. On the northern point at South Weald, it is little more than two miles wide; and at its broadest part from west to east, it is about seven. The parish of Shenfield, belonging to Barstable, is thrust in between it and Chelmsford Hundred; and its boundary trends away to a sharp narrow point by the side of Havering, where it touches upon Ongar district. It comprises the following 14 parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Aveley .....	Name of a Saxon woman, and } ley, pasture .....	3039	811	4413	461 5 0	330 7 0
Childerditch .....		1614	209	1485	170 0 0	
Cranham .....	A resort of Cranes ..	1875	331	2518	560 0 0	
Ockendon, N.... }	Woken, a Saxon, and don, a }	1698	338	2582	497 0 0	
Ockendon, S. ... }	hill,—Wokenshill .....	2907	1021	5276	834 0 0	
Rainham .....	Rein, clean, and ham, a village	3197	868	7751		430 0 0
South Weald .....	Weald, a wood—South Wood...	5037	1883	1959		*680 0 0
Brentwood .....	Burning of a wood or forest .....	1730	2205	5959		
Stifford .....	The soil and a ford .....	1602	320	2519	450 0 0	
Thurrock, Grays }	A grove of oaks dedicated to a }	1634	1713	5028	250 0 0	330 0 0
Thurrock, W.... }	Saxon delty .....	3607	835	6366		313 0 0
Upminster .....	Its situation and its church .....	3373	1228	7391	1052 0 0	
Warley, Great }	Weare, a pond, and ley, un- }	2793	952	4000	523 0 0	
Warley, Little }	titled pasture .....	1651	344	2563	287 10 0	
Wennington .....	The winding of the river .....	1570	177	2790	440 0 0	

\* £16 of this is secured for Warley district church; the great tithes have merged.

The name of the Hundred, like the parish of Chadwell, is believed to have been derived from Bishop Cidd—or, as the vulgar pronounce the name, Chad—the light and the planter of christianity in the district in the early Saxon age. He was the second Bishop of London, being appointed in 658; and he is stated by Bede to have been very active in this district. He gathered together a large congregation of christians at the important city of Tillaberg, on the Thames,—now represented by the village of West Tilbury and its 500 inhabitants; he went preaching through the district; churches rose up, congregations were formed; and “he taught them to observe the discipline of regular life, as far as those rude people were then capable.” So highly was the Bishop venerated for the doctrine and the civilization he sowed, that his name was placed in the list of Saxon saints. It might therefore naturally be used to give distinction to the district; and, with the addition of the ford through the Ingrebrun on the river to Purfleet, in time gave name to the Hundred. Most of the land is good, with rich

marsh pasture towards the river. Indeed, there is arable land in West Thurrock, which produces continuous heavy crops without any manure; and nearly the whole tract on the level stretching from Purfleet to Tilbury is of the same character. The northern part is thickly studded with mansions and parks, abounding as it does with scenes of rich rural beauty, and combining easy access to the business haunts and fashionable and political activity of the metropolis, with all the quiet enjoyments of thorough country life; but though the Hundred was one of the first parts of the county which was peopled, we find not within it a stone of those monastic ruins, nor a remnant of the baronial prison-walls, which remind us of the systems and sufferings of departed days.

BRENTWOOD.—Though only a hamlet of South Weald, Brentwood is yet the principal town in the Hundred, and may be regarded as the head of it. It is situated at the extreme northern corner, about eighteen miles from London, on picturesque high ground, and is surrounded by park-lands, woods, and commons, and pleasant alternations of hill and dale, which present scenery as fine as anywhere to be found in the county. The place was of some note in very early ages. South Weald is stated to have been one of the first inhabited spots in the forest of Essex, and as it lay upon the old Roman way it was probably a halting station for the imperial legions on their march,—possibly at times a point of more permanent occupation. A few earthen vessels and other relics of that people have been dug up in the neighbourhood. There is no evidence, however, to at all bear out the supposition of Camden, that this was the site of Cæsaromagus. In later times, when the county had become fully christianized, Brentwood was the halting-place of pilgrims to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, whence a gate across the road to Ongar obtained the name of Pilgrim's Hatch, which appellation the hamlet still retains. The manor of Brentwood, or Cost-hall, was given by William de Wockendon to the abbey of St. Osyth; and, to catch the offerings of the religious travellers who took this direction to cross the river into Kent, and partly to accommodate their own tenants, the monks in 1221 built the little chapel which, embrowned with the storms of 600 years, still stands in the main street. It is described as having been erected at New Place—probably a spot which had just been redeemed from the forest wilderness, for the enlargement of the village. It was dedicated to Sir Thomas à Becket, and a priest was to officiate there daily. There seems, however, to have been some jealousy in the matter, lest the abbey should

intercept any of the good things which ought properly to go into the net of the priest of South Weald ; but after considerable negociation, stringent regulations were agreed to, and they afford a curious illustration of the religious habits of that age. The chaplain was to swear that he would not knowingly injure the mother-church, or receive any of the parishioners to communion, confessions, or purifications, on Sundays or holidays, without the parson's leave, except on the day of St. Thomas's passion or translation, and at the time of the fair ; and if any profit arose from the parishioners he was to pay it over to the mother-church. The parson might, if he pleased, officiate during the whole time of the fair, and receive the offerings to his own use ; but at all other times of the year the offerings of strangers and passengers were to be for the maintenance of the chaplain, who was to pay yearly two pounds of wax to the parson. Baptism and burial of the dead were strictly prohibited at the chapel. The provision that there should be no burial of the dead will account for the circumstance that not a single funeral monument is to be found in the old chapel. After the cessation of pilgrimages and prayers for the dead, the place continued to be used as a place of public worship by the inhabitants of Brentwood ; but in 1835 they had completely outgrown it, and a neat new church was erected on the south side of the town, at a cost of £3,500, which was raised by subscription ; and the living is now a perpetual curacy in the patronage of C. T. Tower, Esq.

Brentwood is generally reputed to have been once the assize town ; and the assize house which still exists on the south side of the street, now about to be turned by the spirit of the inhabitants into a public hall, is pointed to as a proof of its claim to this dignity. A staid and trustworthy historian of the last century thus adopts and confirms the tradition —“The assizes have been sometimes kept in this town, but the unreasonable expense of obtaining that favour, the want of proper and sufficient accommodation, and the distance of the place from the northern and largest parts of the shire, have generally caused them to be fixed, as well as the sessions, at Chelmsford.” Even in the last century Brentwood had its public races in rivalry of those at Chelmsford, a course being formed on Warley Common ; and we find from a detail of the sports in September, 1765, that they were kept up for two days, and plates of £50. were run for. These have long been discontinued, and the memory of them has almost departed. The town, however, has not decayed. It is one of the few

places which have drawn new life and vigour from the railway. The Crown Inn, which was a hostelry for 400 years, and was for two centuries in the occupation of the family of Salmon, is now the County Bank ; but another very ancient inn, the White Hart, which for some ages has kept its hospitable door open for the traveller, still flourishes. The old houses have been much improved ; new villas have sprung up around ; almshouses, industrial schools, and asylums of city companies have been built in the vicinity ; and the town bears about it the appearance of prosperity, and the signs of further extension.

The GRAMMAR SCHOOL, which stands at the entrance of the town, in the road leading to Ingrave, was founded by Sir Anthony Browne, who obtained the property of the abbey here, after the suppression, he having procured a royal license for the purpose in 1557. The master was to be a priest, nominated by him and his heirs. Two guardians of lands and possessions, inhabitants of South Weald, were to be put in and out at the discretion of the patron ; and the body was to be a perpetual corporation with a common seal. It was endowed with the tithes of Dagenham and Chigwell Grange. By a decree in Chancery, in 1570, the Bishop of London and the Dean of St. Paul's were made visitors ; and in 1622, the institutions of the school, which had been drawn up in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, were published by authority. It was to be open to all boys of the parish, or any other parish within three miles of the school-house, and they were to be taught "grammar-learning gratis." The value of the tithes of Dagenham in the last century was stated to be £400. a year, and Chigwell Grange was set down at £80. ; but by the progressive increase in the value of property, the first now yields more than £1,000., and the other £330. When the charity commissioners made their inquiry they found the benefits of the school fell far short of the requirements of the district, and the capabilities of the endowment. At their instance an attempt was made to shake off the cobwebs which had been woven around the institution, and crippled its usefulness. A long course of litigation followed, spreading over more than 20 years ; decrees, appeals, and fresh suits protracted the case, till at last, in 1848, it was found necessary to resort to an act of parliament to give effect to a new scheme of the Court of Chancery, to vary and extend the trusts, enlarge the charitable uses, and regulate the property of the institution. By this, new life has been given to the whole. C. T. Tower, Esq., as lord of the manor and owner of the property which belonged to Sir Anthony, continues the patron, but the affairs of the trust

are administered by wardens, selected from gentlemen of the district.

Good provision is made in the town for the education of the poor. There are the national schools—which, besides the grant from the grammar school fund, are endowed with the interest of £500 left by Mr. John Offin in 1840; the independents have a school; and the neat Roman Catholic chapel, erected at the entrance of the town in 1837, under the auspices of Lord Petre, has also schools attached to it.

**SOUTH WEALD—THE SEAT OF C. T. TOWER, Esq.—**South Weald from very early times consisted chiefly of monastery lands. Harold in 1062 gave the manor of South Weald or Walda, to the abbey of Waltham; and at the time of the survey the abbot was the owner of the greater part of the parish. Boyles, or Bowels, belonged to Blackmore Priory; and Caldecots to the abbey at Stratford. After the suppression the property remained for a time in the crown; and at the Hall during that period dwelt the princess afterwards Queen Mary; her name has left many a legend lingering about the dwelling; and yonder little antique looking detached gardeners' house was the Roman Catholic chapel in which she worshipped. Subsequently most of the estates were granted to Sir Brian Tuke, of Layer Marney, a man of great eloquence and learning, who had been ambassador to France, and was Treasurer of the Chamber to Henry VIII. From his family they passed to Lord Rich, who seems to have sold them to Sir Anthony Browne, of a family connected with the county, though originally from the west of England. In 1558, he was made Chief Justice of the Common Pleas,—an office from which he was deposed by Elizabeth in 1560, on account of his being a papist; though he continued one of the judges till his death. He resided at Weald Hall, and founded, as before stated, the grammar school and almshouses. He left no children; and the estates afterwards passing through various families, were purchased in 1750 by Thomas Tower, Esq., whose great nephew, C. T. Tower, Esq., is now lord of most of the parish. His residence, the Hall, stands on yonder thickly-wooded hill-top, which is seen about a mile to the left as we reach the London end of Brentwood, the antique chimnies and the spire of the parish church just rising above the tops of the venerable trees. Now we have climbed the hill, we find it one of the most beautiful spots in Essex. The mansion is a fine building, with six Ionic columns in the front, most of the ancient structure having disappeared under the hand of improvement and change. The road to Ongar runs in front of the



Hall, and away to the southward the lands fall into a deep valley; a fine prospect is obtained of the park and woods of Sir Digby Neave to the west, and the open country up to the Thames, with the land of Kent beyond. On the north the land falls away to a fine sheet of water of thirteen acres, and swells up again beyond in a green hill some half a mile away, the park being studded with long rows and clustering clumps of noble trees, which probably stood here when Queen Mary wandered in their midst, and Sir Anthony Browne paced the shaded walks. An ornamental tower called the Belvidere tower has been erected at an elevated part of the park, close to the Hall, to enable the visitor to enjoy the scene. As we gaze from its top, at the foot of the hill, below us, to the right lies the hamlet of Brook-street; and there in Spital Lane, stood an hospital for lepers, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and founded by the Bryn family in the 14th century. The hospital is gone, and were it still standing it would be a sinecure, for lepers appear to have departed from the land. That pleasant mansion, on the eminence in the midst of a wooded lawn, in the direction from Brook-street to Warley, is Great Ropers, the seat of F. H. Hirst, Esq.; and from here, too, in the same district, we catch a glimpse of Boyles, the residence of J. Lescher, Esq., who has enriched it with a museum of antiquities and works of art. Immediately below us are the elegant new national schools, built and endowed by the Rev. C. A. Belli, the rector, at a cost of about £8,000. In the Vicarage-lane to the left are the neat new alms-houses, with a small chapel in the centre, erected from the funds of the renovated charity of Sir Anthony Browne, and in which ten of the honest poor find comfortable shelter in the winter of their days. Beyond them is the villa of Luptons, now the property of C. T. Tower, Esq., and formerly in the occupation of Sir Nicolas Tindal, the Lord Chief Justice. Years ago, too, Disraeli the elder resided here, and his gifted son, a thin pale youth, might be seen gamboling about these hills, little conscious of the political heights to which he was destined to climb. Close by, on the road towards Ongar, is Rochetts, the residence of O. E. Coope, Esq., and formerly the property of the late Earl and Countess St. Vincent.

On entering the mansion of Weald Hall we find its rooms of noble proportions, which bear out the repute of its ancient state. Many of them have beautifully worked ceilings—that of the saloon, it has been declared by a first-rate artist of the day, could not be executed for 2,000 guineas—and their walls are richly covered



with paintings from master hands, some of them let into the walls, thus forming, as it were, part and parcel of the estate. The hall is a splendid apartment, large enough for the olden baron to have received his retainers within it, or the rich abbot of Waltham, when he was the owner, to have feasted his fraternity and their guests. It is 48 feet by 34 feet, and 34 feet high. Amongst the paintings—for we can only take a bird's-eye glance of the best, as we pass from room to room—a view of the ancient house, taken by Greffier 200 years ago, decorates one end, and in this some features of the northern face, though now covered thickly with mantling ivy, can still be traced. Here, too, is a fine Rubens—a tiger and her whelps, after the style of Snyders, which it is known the artist sometimes followed—the Port of Baiæ, near Naples, by Castro; and portraits of James II. and Charles II. Turning from the other paintings to the works of the sculptor, we find heads of Socrates and Homer, Seneca and Cicero, Locke and Dryden; and on the table at the lower end a fine head of the first Bonaparte, by Canova, which was given by Admiral Tower to Earl St. Vincent, and returned by Lady Jervis, after the noble veteran's death. The north drawing room teems with treasures of art. In wandering over its walls, the eye is attracted by a beautiful specimen of the rich tapestry which used to adorn the olden halls, by Klein, who made the tapestry for the Vatican, at Rome; and the genius of Salvator Rosa has depicted two scenes from Diogenes—one in which the cynic, seeing a man drinking out of his hand, throws away his cup; the other, in which seeing a man writing over his door—"Nothing of evil enters here," writes under it—"How did he get there?" The visitor then turns with a sort of veneration to the opposite wall, where he beholds the celebrated picture of Titian, for which 2,000 guineas have been offered and refused, in which the immortal artist, in limning the form of Catherine, has introduced himself as Gustavus of Sweden. We linger over it, but at length wrest away the eye, and it falls first upon five portraits, by Cornelius Jansen, of the political leaders who were confined in the Round Tower at Windsor, when Colonel Pride purged the parliament in 1647—Sir William Waller, Clotworthy, Browne, Massey, and Copley: then upon a Lady Abbess, by Vandyke; a holy family by Raphael; two famous Ruysdaels, to which there is a companion in the dining room; the Marriage of St. Catherine, by Correggio; two battle pieces, by Wouvermans; two beautiful gems, by Polemburgh; another by Sassa Ferrato, after Guido; and over the mantel a large and noble piece by Salvator Rosa. Beneath is a small portrait of Bonaparte, the last taken, by David, in Paris,

having upon the frame this inscription—"This portrait of the Emperor Napoleon was presented by his sister, Caroline, Queen of Naples, to Captain Tower, of his Majesty's ship *Caracoa*,—Naples, July, 1814." Captain (afterwards Admiral) Tower was one of the officers who commanded the guard ship at Elba. The saloon is a fine apartment, 36 feet square and 18 high. The attention here is first attracted by four large paintings of scenes from Tasso, by Paolo Mattei, representing Aladdin delivering his sword to Godfrey,—the battle, with the angel Michael in the clouds putting the enemies of the Christians to flight,—the death of Argantes,—and Olinda and Sophronia tied to the stake, with Clorinda ordering them to be released. Over the doors, beautifully executed in basso-relievo, are heads of Petrarch, Machiavel, Galileo, and Amerigo Vespucci. Around the room runs a range of black marble and oak bookcases, tastefully framed by the hand of a first-rate artist, out of the native oak of the neighbouring park; amongst the treasures with which the shelves are stored we find many rare works, several of those richly illuminated missals on which the pious artists of the old faith bestowed so much of their labour, and fine sets of engravings of Albert Durer and other masters of that art. In the dining room, again, we come upon the "animated canvas" over which the hand of genius has passed and left its almost living stamp. The walls are adorned by "Venus rising from the Sea," by Lucca Giordano; a fine portrait of Lord Strafford, by Vandyke; and a picture by Wootton of the "Battle of the Boyne," at the moment King James is ordering his troops to cross the river. Here, too, we find works of Lucatella, Both, Backhuysen, and a good painting by Sir William Beechey of the late Mr. Tower. In the library are works of Carlo Marratti, Teniers, and others. This bears the royal arms, and is "Queen Mary's parlour," from its being traditionally the apartment in which the Princess used to sit during her residence here, joining in the conversation of her attendants, or looking out upon the rural beauties of yon green vale and wooded hills, and brooding over her position, at that time rather a perilous one. We have now traversed the principal rooms below; but there are still many objects of antiquity and art scattered about other parts of the mansion—pictures on the staircase—and a whole gallery devoted to a collection of antique china, with battalions of the coquetish little tea-pots, and a regiment of the diminutive cups, out of which our great grandmothers sipped their scant supply of the sober beverage.

On quitting the hall we wander through the park in a

north-easterly direction, catching, as we pass, glimpses of wild forest scenery, with magnificent oaks, till upon its verge we reach the Wolf-pit, now arched over—a remnant of the time when the wild beast ranged the forest, and the Druid sacrificed in the neighbouring thicket. Crossing this we enter the site of a *Castra Exploratorum*, or flying camp of the Romans, the boundaries of which are still clearly defined.\* It enclosed a space of about seven acres, the site stretching into the neighbouring farm of Langtons. Within this space a coin of Vespasian has been turned up by the plough ; and there can be no doubt, as we look down the slope of these earthworks, that here has been seen the glitter of Roman arms, and here has been heard the steady tread of the Roman sentinel, when the imperial invaders held rule over the settlements which began to be formed in the neighbouring forest.

Bawdes, at Pilgrims Hatch, formerly the seat of the Manby family, one of whom was knighted by James II., lately belonged to Dios Santos, Esq., but is now a school. It has a neat brick mansion and a pleasant park.

The church is a fine ancient building, its stone tower rising above the trees on the hill-top—a sacred landmark to the country around. Entering the yard by a lich or corpse gate of the 15th century, we approach the church, which is well calculated to arrest the attention of the antiquarian. The tower was built in the time of Henry VII., but the other parts of the sacred edifice are of more ancient date. The early English pillars, which divide the chancel and nave, north chapel and aisle, rest on Norman foundations. The building contains several elegant monuments, one to Hugh Smith, Esq., a former lord of the manor ; another to the Neave family ; and in the centre of the chancel stands the tomb of Sir Anthony Browne, of delicate workmanship, the top covered with a black marble slab, but the figures are much mutilated, and most of the brasses, which contained shields, and a legend, are gone. At the feet of the figures is the following inscription in Latin :—“ Sir Anthony Browne, *knt.*, Justice of the Queen’s Bench. He died May 16, 1567, aged 57. And Johanna his wife.”

For the repairs of the church, Edward Lambe left a house, and John Wright a rent-charge of £2 out of Boyles. The poor have the rent of a cottage and garden at Aveley, left by H. Waller, in 1601 ; a rent-charge of £8 out of a house at Halsted, left by J. Wright, in 1602 ; the interest of £100 left by Sarah Wright in 1754, to be given in sums of 5s. each to

\* Sir Dugdale’s *Monasticon* in the British Museum.

the industrious poor on the 28rd of April; and the dividends of £100, left by William Jefferson, in 1822, to be distributed in bread. A cottage at Doddinghurst List, usually occupied rent free, was given by G. Gittens, in 1711, for distributing 80s. yearly to the poor. The charities specially applied to Brentwood are a rent-charge of 20s, out of Pottels, for the poor; who have also the dividends of £1,000 Stock, left by Stephen Martin, in 1803, for distribution in coals; the dividends of £115. 18s. 2d. left by William Newman in 1835, to be given in money; and a share of Waller's charity.

**THE COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM.**—Commencing our pilgrimage through the other parts of the Hundred, we cross the railway on the south of Brentwood, and plunge into a district finely diversified by hill and dale, and which—especially at Warley Gap, and other points—if not so rich as some other portions of the county in historical memories, presents extended views, sheltering woodlands, and quiet scenes of rural home life, to the eye. Here, on the brow of the first hill, finely adapted for the purpose, stands the County Lunatic Asylum—a building as noble in its object as in its architecture—within whose walls are assembled 426 of those poor afflicted ones, over whose diseased brain and wandering intellect confusing clouds have gathered. The first stone of the building was laid by C. G. Round, Esq., on the 2nd of October, 1851, and its doors were opened for the reception of patients on the 28rd of September, 1853. The style of the asylum is mediæval, of the Tudor period, which, it has been observed, is the best adapted for such a purpose, being substantial, cheerful, English in character, most suitable to the climate, and not expensive: it gives the opportunity of breaking the building into masses and picturesque forms, without adding to the cost. The towering pinnacles of the almost philanthropic pile render it a picturesque object in the landscape, as viewed from the high road, or glanced at from yonder embankment by the passing traveller along the rail. The total cost was £89,557, of which £81,000 was borrowed by the county, and is in the course of repayment by instalments, which are spread over 30 years. There are now within its walls 175 male and 251 female patients. The sum paid by the different unions in the county for their lunatics was £10,074. 1s. 11d. in the last year; and the total receipts, including unions not contributing, funeral expenses, private patients, of whom there were 16, and the produce of the garden and farm, were £12,260. 6s. 11d. The expenditure left a balance of £1,392. 17s. 7d. The staff consists of Dr. Campbell, the medical superintendent; a chaplain, a medical assistant and

dispenser, a steward and clerk, with 27 male and 26 female attendants and servants. It is almost a holy characteristic of the institution that there are never heard within it the harsh voice of brutal command, the rattle of the harsher chain, or the sound of the ready blow, followed by the howl of tortured agony, which, even in our day, were thought the proper "medicines for the mind diseased." Generous treatment, diverting employment, innocent amusements—including summer excursions into the surrounding country, and a new year's ball—and an absence of all unnecessary restraint, carried out with firm and watchful tenderness, are the principles which guide the management; and, large as was the outlay for its erection, it is a source of pride and profit to the ratepayers to see many of those who were formerly considered hopeless burdens for life returned to their parishes healed.

**THE WARLEYS—THE MILITARY DEPÔT.**—A furlong further on, on the opposite side of the road, stands the new church of Warley, with its appendant schools, erected about six years ago for the accommodation of the inhabitants of this part of the parish. Its cost was raised by subscription. The Rev. Dr. Robinson, the rector, contributed largely, and Miss Clay, his sister-in-law, endowed it. Away to the left stretches Warley Common, the scene of many pleasant gatherings in the last century, when Brentwood races were held here, the sports extending over two days; but they have long since been discontinued, and the memory of them has almost passed away. At the lower end of the Common stands the depôt of the East India Company. The buildings were originally erected by the government in 1805 as barracks for 2,000 cavalry; but being long unoccupied, they were purchased by the Company, together with 120 acres of the Common, in 1842, for the sum of £17,000. Additions have since been made to them, and 40 cottages have been built on the Common for married soldiers. Here are trained most of the recruits for the Eastern army, about 1,000 being sent out yearly; and from hence went forth many of the warriors who in the late mutiny showed their prowess at Delhi, at Lucknow, and in Oude.

The Warleys, in the earliest records we have of them, belonged principally to the church. The manor of Great Warley, from a period before the Conquest down to the Reformation, was part of the possessions of Barking Abbey, whence it has sometimes been called Abbess Warley. In 1669 it was purchased by Richard Wynne, Esq., a London merchant, and is now in Lord Headley, a Scotch peer, the representative of the same family. J. B. Sheridan, Esq., is lord of Warley Franks; and

St. Thomas's Hospital owns property in the parish. Little Warley—anciently called *Septer-Morler*, because it is believed there were seven mills here—had been in Saxon times in the possession of the church of St. Paul's, but was given by the Conqueror to the Bishop of London. The manor afterwards passed to the Tyrell family, who were possessed of the rectory from 1382 down to about 25 years ago; and we afterwards find it in Sir Denner Strutt, the ancestor of Lord Rayleigh, who, with his lady, slumbers in the little antique church, beneath a canopy supported by two cupids, and not far from the wife of John Tyrell, Esq., who died in 1592. The manor is now in Lord Headley. The old manor-houses have disappeared; that of Great Warley, an antique pile, which stood behind the church, was down more than a century ago. There are, however, some elegant modern mansions scattered around the neighbourhood—Great Warley Place, the seat of Frederick Francis Esq., and Warley Lodge, occupied by Charles Gonne, Esq., with its pleasant walks and wooded grounds. In Little Warley there is a charitable property, consisting of four tenements and 16 acres of land, left by Hugh Chappington, in 1693, first to his nephew, and in default of heirs, which occurred in 1706, to the poor. The houses are occupied by poor families, and the rent of the land is distributed in coals.

**CHILDERDITCH—CRANHAM.**—Yonder to the north, as we traverse the Warleys, lies the parish of Childerditch, with the wide woodlands of Thorndon Hall in the foreground, and its fine valley—a parish which, with its rectory, from the period of the survey down to the Reformation, belonged to Coggeshall Abbey, but is now the property of Lord Petre. Further on, away to the right on that pretty eminence, is Cranham, or Wokendon-Episcopi, as it was anciently called, from its forming a part of the Ockendons, and being owned by the Bishops of London. It is now the property of St. George's Hospital, being bequeathed to it by the late Sir T. G. Apreece.

**UPMINSTER—THE SEAT OF THE HIGH SHERIFF.**—Beyond this, and running up to the verge of the hundred at Havering, from which it is cut off by the Ingerbourn, is the long and narrow parish of Upminster, extending seven miles from north to south but only about a mile broad. With its two hamlets of Hacton and Corbets Tye, its church—the Minster, as it was called of old—its pleasant modern mansions and ancient manor-houses, it is a beautiful spot, abounding in quiet home scenes and distant views. “From the top of the windmill in the middle of the parish”—says Wilson, in his *Sketches of Upminster*—“we may see it mapped out. A branch of the



British track-way between London and Lexden (Camulodonum) has been supposed to have passed through the village, and by Hornchurch to the green-lane extending to Ilford. Beneath us are two roads crossing each other in the direction of the cardinal points, the church, the chapel, the schools, and a few dwellings of the village. The grounds of Gaines are seen in the south, with Hactons to the right and Fox Hall on the left; Upminster Hall and New Manor in the north, New Place in the east, and Bridge House in the west. The features of our neighbouring parishes and of the country many miles round, are distinctly visible from this elevation, which commands a panorama of forty miles from east to west, exhibiting that pleasing interspersion of fields, and woods, and home-steads, which is so general in our part of the county, encircled by the hills of Essex, Middlesex, Surrey, and Kent." Many men of interest in olden history have owned the property, and probably have resided here; but their footprints are obliterated, and they have left nought but their names in musty parchments. Walter de Doai and Bishop Odo held a great part of the lands at the time of the survey; but in 1242 Gaines fell to the family of De Engaine—whence its name—who held the manor by the serjeantry of keeping the king's greyhounds. It afterwards came into other families, who held it by the yearly rent of a pair of gilt spurs, value 6d.; and amongst its possessors have been the Lathams and the D'Ewes. In 1760 it was purchased by Sir James Esdaile, Knight, who demolished the old manor-house, raised a modern mansion, and planted extensive grounds about it. This in turn was pulled down in 1820, and the lands were cut up and parcelled out amongst different purchasers. The present house, in the Tudor style, was built by the Rev. George Clayton in 1846.

Upminster Hall, the seat of the present High Sheriff, was one of the lordships given by Harold to his Abbey of Waltham, and the abbots appear to have made it an occasional residence—a hunting seat, as the historian tells us, to which they could retire from the solitude of the cloister, to enjoy the sports of the forest and follow the chase. At the dissolution, the estate was granted to Lord Cromwell, but afterwards passed to Ralph Latham, Esq., a rich London goldsmith; and in 1685 it was purchased by Capt. Branfill, of Dartmouth, in Devonshire, who is stated to have had the command of a ship at the age of 19, and amassed a considerable fortune. It is believed the original name of the family was Bampfield, but for some cause was altered to Branfill, as the arms of these families are the same.



The gentleman who thus planted the family in Essex, where it has ever since flourished, married Damaris, daughter of John Aylett, Esq., of Kelvedon Hatch, son of the Capt. Aylett who spent his fortune so freely in support of King Charles, and was amongst the gallant defenders of Colchester against the Puritans. For his gallantry he had added to his arms the motto, "Not in vain;" and it is still borne by the Branfill family, of which the High Sheriff, though wearing the name of Russell, as the inheritor of that gentleman's estates, is the direct representative. The mansion is the only spot in the parish which has antiquarian objects and interest about it. "Entering the grounds at the new lodge," says the writer before quoted, "which is several rods southward of the former, the Hall is seen to great advantage; and the lands around present the features of a fine country. Glancing upon the scene as it unfolds, we realize the picture so faithfully described by the topographer at the end of the last century—the grounds finely wooded, and falling in a beautiful manner from the back of the hall, which commands a glorious distant view of the Laindon Hills, and the high hills of Kent on the other side of the Thames, of whose waters and shipping a glance is sometimes caught between them. But the ancient building before us attracts us. From its mullioned bay windows, wide gables, and deep eave boards, its numerous clustered lofty chimney shafts, and other peculiarities of the erections of its era, we may fairly infer that it was originally an edifice worthy the wealthy abbots of Waltham. It is timber built, and the most ancient parts bear the date of Henry VI. The spacious staircase and gallery are probably of the age of Charles. There is no doubt that the central part was inhabited by the abbots. The drawing and dining rooms, and other portions of the building, have been adapted to present taste and convenience. Many family portraits and other paintings adorn the walls of the drawing room and gallery, amongst them those of Champion Branfill, Esq., who was high sheriff of Essex in 1734, and his wife, called 'the belle of Essex.' The dim religious light, which gives an imaginary monastic tone to the hall and winding passages, awakens reminiscences of the manners and customs of its original inhabitants. On the north is a triple avenue of walnut and chestnut trees, the former planted on the outside and the latter within. A portion of the moat remains, and is rendered ornamental by a rustic bridge, which connects the lawn with a grass terrace, whence interesting views of the county are obtained. A chapel, built of stone by the abbot of Waltham, for the use of the lord of the manor and his tenantry, was standing in the middle of the last century. It contained

a baptismal font provided by the abbot. After the chapel had been taken down, Champion Branfill, Esq., presented the font to the church of Upminster. A vestige of the chapel was inserted, as a memorial, in the south end of the stables, which were destroyed by fire on the 17th of March, 1852. Near this spot a plain circular arched vault, about 25 feet long, which was probably beneath the chapel, still remains. From the hollow sound of the ground in the garden another vault is supposed to exist. There was a cemetery contiguous to the chapel. Portions of human bones, and sometimes entire skeletons, have been found at various times, two feet below the surface of the earth. Though several woods and coppices named in the ancient notices of this manor have been long since removed, and time has thinned its timber during the present century, there are still many fine trees standing; and we must not quit the grounds without noticing the fine limes before the hall." Mrs. Branfill at present occupies the family mansion, and the High Sheriff temporarily resides at Stubbers, in the neighbouring parish of North Ockendon.

There are a number of other good residences in the parish—Hoppy Hill, in particular, and High House, east of the church, where Lord Byron, when on a visit to Major Howard, is said to have written part of "Childe Harold." The gardens of both these houses are adorned with exceedingly large and beautiful cedars. Harewood is a good mansion, the late residence of P. Z. Cox, Esq., near Corbets Tye, surrounded by park-like grounds, and approached by a pleasant avenue; New Place, a handsome mansion on the east of the village, is held by F. Francis, Esq.; Hacton House, with a fine lawn and belts of woodland, belongs to the Rev. R. Battiscombe. Old Hacton House stood at the foot of the hill, beyond the bridge; its site is still marked by here and there a fragment of a shrubbery run wild, and a few solitary trees, survivors of its pleasant avenue. Near by is a brick building, 70 feet long, now used as a barn, with remains of mullioned windows, and stone mantel-pieces of about the age of Henry VI., which mark it as having been in former days a place of some state. A lingering scrap of village tradition whispers that Queen Elizabeth slept here the night before she reviewed the troops at Tilbury, but this we know to be an error; and the same authority adds that the maiden queen gave name to yonder hamlet, by calling out to one of her attendants, as she was passing through the parish, "Corbet, stay," in order that she might enjoy the beauty of the scene.

The church of Upminster stands in the centre of the parish,

buried in a cluster of beautiful elms, planted by Dr. Derham, a writer of some note, and of considerable scientific attainments, who was rector here in 1689; and an avenue of chesnuts shades the path to the porch. The church itself is of humble character, but evidently of some antiquity; and the mantling ivy, which has wound its arms around the tower, gives it a venerable appearance. The chief attractions in the interior are the octagonal font brought from the Hall chapel, a fine specimen of the perpendicular period, the sides of the basin being richly carved; and St. Mary's or Engaine's chapel, which is the eastern part of the northern aisle, divided from the other portion by an oaken screen of the age of Henry VI. The chapel was originally built by Sir John Engaine, as a burial place for his family, but it has been utterly destroyed by the bungling improvers of later days. A Mr. Clarke, with a good deal of piety but very little taste, re-built and barbarised the north aisle in 1630; and, proud of the exploit, took credit for having "at his sole charge repaired and beautified it." Sir James Esdaile completed the mischief by pulling down the portions which remained, and re-arranging the chapel in 1771. The feeling which it calls up is one of regret; and the only objects of interest to which we can turn are the funeral monuments and inscriptions which have survived the foray of the pilferer and the improver. There are memorials to the D'Ewes, the D'Eyncourts, the Clarkes, the Esdailes, and other possessors of the estates of the parish. In the west end of the aisle is the vault of the Branfills, and amongst the family inscriptions is the following over one who took an active part in the battles and business of the county in our own time:—

"To the memory of Champion Edward Branfill, only son of Champion Branfill, of Upminster Hall, Esq., who was born on the 18th day of July, 1789, and deceased on the 7th of October, 1844. He served as a Captain of the 8rd Regiment of Dragoons in the Peninsular war, and on his retirement in the year 1816, was commissioned justice of the peace and deputy-lieutenant of this county."

The only charity in the parish is a rent-charge of £4. 10s. on Cockhides, North Ockendon, given by Thomas Frith, in 1610, for an annual sermon and bread to the poor.

THE OCKENDONS, NORTH AND SOUTH, two scattered and rural villages, lie adjacent, under the shelter of the range of hills which bound the valley of the Thames. The parishes, in former times, were of some note, as the homes of powerful families, and were celebrated for the possession of seven springs, which possessed peculiar medical properties. Modern residences have superseded the antique dwellings; the invalid searches for the healing springs in vain; and at the present

day there is more to attract the attention of the agriculturist than the step of the antiquarian. Mrs. Snowden occupies North Ockendon Hall—which on yonder eminence commands a fine prospect—and cultivates the lands around, which were owned by Harold before the Conquest, and afterwards passed through the Poyntz family—who long made this manor-house their residence—to their present lord, R. B. De Beauvoir, Esq. South Ockendon Hall is tenanted by Mr. C. Sturgeon, whose family has made it and the homestead widely known in various parts of the world for the stock bred and sent forth from them, especially Merino sheep. On this manor, and not far from the church, stood the stately old moated mansion of the Bryns, a family, says Camden, “in former ages as famous as any one in this tract; out of the two heirs female whereof, being many times married to sundry husbands, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, the Tyrells, Berners, Harlestons, and Haveninghams, are descended.” On the death of Sir Henry Bryn, in 1471, his estates were divided, and this manor fell to Elizabeth, the daughter, who married as her second husband Thomas Tyrell, Esq., of Herons, and the Tyrell family possessed the property for many years. This lady afterwards married Sir William Brandon, standard bearer of Henry VII. on the field of Bosworth, where he was slain by the hand of Richard III. Not a room of the old mansion in which the first Duke of Suffolk was born is now left; but the stone Gothic front has survived, with a few modern touches, and is an interesting relic of the grim grandeur of other days.

The churches are rich in memorials of the former lords of the soil; but that of South Ockendon is in a wretched and reproachful state, the windows are broken, the water oozes through the roof, and the north chapel, once the stately mausoleum of the noble owners of the parish, and still containing monuments worthy of reverence, is a dreary and dirty lumber room. The tower is round, and it is therefore ordinarily assumed that it was raised by the Danes—but it is not quite certain that it is to be referred to that remote age. It was formerly crowned by a spire, which, however, was destroyed by lightning in 1688, and has never been replaced. In the sacred edifice are inscriptions to the Bryns so far back as 1400, and one to Sir Richard Saltonstall, “lord of the town,” and also Lord Mayor of London in 1598. That of North Ockendon was thoroughly restored in 1858 by Mr. Benyon, the patron, at a cost of more than £1,000. On the north side of the chancel there is a chapel specially erected as the burial place of the lords of the manor. In the east

window are seen "in gorgeous brilliancy, the leopards of England, the lilies of France, the varied shield of Warren; and amidst these appears the ancient and scarcely less beautiful shield of Poyntz." The chapel is full of memorial slabs, brass plates, and effigies of the Poyntzs. If the visitor pauses at two fine brasses on the floor, of the date of 1502, he will perceive that part of the inscription, recognising the doctrine of purgatory, has been partially defaced, probably by the Puritans, in their crusade for purifying the churches of the remnants of these principles. Amongst this series of epitaphs, which are all in Latin, is one on Thomas Poyntz, who died in 1562, possessed of considerable estates in this and the neighbouring parishes, of whom the stone tells us that "for his most faithful service to his prince, and his most ardent profession of the truth of the gospel, he suffered bonds and imprisonment beyond sea, and was destined to death if he had not wonderfully escaped out of prison by the Divine assistance." As we find he married Anne Van Calva, a German, we conclude it was the old romantic tale of love in a prison and matrimony with the fair deliverer.

The charities of North Ockendon consist of a rent-charge of £3, left by Sir William Russell, in 1704, 20s. to be for a sermon, 5s. for the clerk, and 35s. for the poor; the interest of £500 left by Daniel Russell, in 1788; the rent of Steedon Hills Farm, Horndon, of forty acres, purchased with £200 left by Richard Poyntz, in 1643, and £24. 4s. 4d. given by the parish. In South Ockendon, J. Cliff, Esq., in 1828, left £40 a-year for the dissenting minister, and £5 for the poor.

STIFFORD, a little farther to the south, is a pleasant spot upon the landscape, with its hills and dales, and tracts of belting woodlands. Here we first touch upon the chalk, which, unseen in the centre of the county, now rises to the surface, and extends to the river; the pits are extensive, but long disused; and being richly wooded, form one of the summer attractions of this picturesque village. Tradition, too, asserts that there was once some maritime trade here, the little shallow Mardyke, which runs almost unnoticed by the traveller along the north, being once navigable up to Bulphan Fen, where an ancient boat, it is said, has been found; but this must refer to times so far back, that in the absence of authentic record no decided opinion can be pronounced on it. Stifford Lodge, the chief house in the parish, the seat of J. R. Greig, Esq., is a goodly mansion. R. B. Baker, Esq. is lord and owner of most of the lands, they being leased to his family by the Embroiderers' Company,

which has long held them ; and the renovated church is about to testify to his pious liberality as a patron. At his charge the sacred edifice has been recently surveyed by an eminent London architect, Mr. Slater, with a view, it is understood, to a thorough restoration ; Mr. Baker having previously built the parish school in 1840 at a cost of £200. The ancient and interesting church contains many tombs and olden brasses, which, through the care of the Rev. W. Palin, the rector, and his predecessors, have been well preserved. Several of them are without date ; the following inscription is amongst the most ancient :—

“Of your charite pray for the soull of John Ardalle, gentleman, some time Lord of Styfford, and Ane his wyf, which John decessed the last May, 1504, and for his fader soull, and his moder soull, and all christen soullys on whose soullys Jhu have mercy. Amen.”

On a stone on the ground in the chancel, on Anthony Bradshaw, of Stifford Clays, who died in 1636, his wife and son, are the following strange lines, which, between poet and engraver, present a curious jumble :—

“An unknown Grave murders those dead  
Who'd still : outlive themselves, to bury  
Worse than kill : thus wrapped in stone  
We keep, and children give : their  
Parents life : thus burying them alive :  
This silent grave consents that death  
To break : the unnatural Use, made  
This stone to speake.”

The charities of Stifford are a rent-charge of 20s. for the poor out of Cat's Mead, left by John Durninge, in 1681.

GRAYS THURROCK, adjacent, partakes of a picturesque and a commercial character, and is a town of some pretension. It stands at the mouth of a creek, and had a pier 400 feet long, at which many passenger steamers plying upon the Thames called, and a regular communication was kept up with the opposite shore. The pier was built by a company in 1841, at a cost of £2,500.; but the rivalry of the railway has drawn off its traffic, and it is degraded to the purpose of a dung-wharf. The mansion of the chief lord of Grays stood on the right of the road leading to Stifford, and was once inhabited by the Earls of Essex. The manor was granted by Richard I. (1149) to the Greys, with the special privilege of hunting the hare and the fox in any lands belonging to the crown, excepting the king's own parks. This family held it for nearly 500 years, though the knights of St. John of Jerusalem at the same time owned part of the parish ; and since then it has passed through various parties of

little note in history, to the Theobalds, its present proprietors. The chief mansion in the parish is Belmont Castle, a modern imitation, in style as well as in name, of the old baronial residence, now the seat of J. T. Rigge, Esq. It was built by the late Z. Button, Esq., about half a mile to the west of the town. The centre forms an embattled tower, rising four stories high, and from its spacious apartments a fine and full prospect is gained of the river, and of much of the interior of Kent, up to and beyond the great Dover road. The architect appears to have finished all with the most costly taste; it is surrounded by beautiful grounds and gardens, but lacks the charm which usually hovers about these castle-shaped dwellings, as we know that from the battlements neither knight nor lady fair has ever seen a hostile sail on yonder waters, or looked down upon other than peaceful visitors below.

Grays appears to have been a market town as early as 1207. Richard de Grey obtained a charter for a market here on Fridays (afterwards altered to Thursday) in the reign of Henry III.; it was confirmed by Edward III. in 1380; and in the middle of the last century, it is stated to have been much frequented on account of the ready communication with London by hoys; but its trade was drawn off, and it was at length swallowed up by that of Romford. It continues, however, a place of considerable business, from its wharves, lime quarries, and extensive works of this kind, which give employment to about 300 persons. The exports of the place amount to upwards of a quarter of a million tons per annum, exclusive of the railway, and of the agricultural lime fetched away by the farmers' wagons. Beside the chalk works, there are large manufactories of tiles and pipes; there is in course of erection an extensive factory for making pulp for paper, and ultimate of ammonia; it is not improbable that many others will follow, and that Grays, enjoying as it does a beautiful position on the river, will become an important manufacturing town in this part of Essex.

The geological characteristics of Grays are of a peculiarly interesting kind. One of the most curious features of the place—as we learn from Richard Meeson, Esq., to whom we are indebted for part of these particulars—is the elephant bed, which is a bed of brick earth, containing the fossil remains of extinct mammalia of great size and many varieties, together with shells, wood, and beautiful impressions of leaves. This bed is above the chalk. The yew forest of the Thames is well developed on the shore. It consists of three layers of forest trees, principally yew, and underwood, which appears to be mostly hazel. These



beds contain the bones of deer, bears, and many small animals, the remains of beetles and other insects; also, hazel nuts, eaten out by squirrels and dormice, &c. None of these are in a fossil state, and yet no remains of man are found amongst them. The chalk contributes its peculiar fossils, many of which, of great beauty, occupy their places in the public collections of the country. In fact, the geology of Grays is far better known to the learned bodies of Europe than can be easily believed by the inhabitants of Essex. The antiquities found in excavating so large a surface are numerous and interesting. There are many ancient excavations into the chalk, which have given rise to much discussion, some calling them "Dane holes," "King Cunobeline's gold mines," &c. There is scarcely a field in the neighbourhood where they do not exist. One which was opened contained great quantities of Roman vases, all broken, however, from the roof having fallen in. They had contained burnt human bones, amongst which was a spindle wheel. The most plausible belief is that these excavations were simply for the purpose of obtaining chalk for burning lime, and were continued during many centuries, some of them being afterwards used for burial places and other purposes. Some are covered with timber, others are partially filled, and nearly all of the same form, a well being first sunk through the top soil, and vaults or galleries formed from it into the chalk. At the bottom of the well a pile of chalk was afterwards placed, and the hole filled up. Mr. Meeson has Roman vases of many descriptions, found at other places in the parish, as well as some which are believed to be ancient British; also a denarius of Claudius, and other objects which appear to have come from the wreck of a Roman vessel on the shore. In excavating for the railway a very fine pavement of early English was laid bare, some of the tesserae being only one inch square; this was carefully preserved, and removed to the vestry.

The church, a handsome edifice, was rebuilt by the parishioners in 1841, the cross-like form of the old structure being religiously preserved. The parish registers only go back to 1670, but they record many curious facts illustrative of the danger and inconvenience of traversing the river between Gravesend and London at that period; in 1697 it appears the tilt boat was wrecked near this shore, and fifty-six persons were drowned. There is a school in the parish, endowed by William Palmer in 1706, with six houses in London—five in Whitecross-street, and one in Lombard-street; some of these have been sold, and the property of the charity now consists of the dividends of £944. 12s. 6d., Three per Cents., and the

houses 218 and 220, Whitecross-street, and 43, Lombard-street, the whole producing about £140. a year. The donor also left the school-master's house. Twenty free scholars are taught, and four clothed; coals and bread are distributed to the poor; £1. was left for a sermon on the 5th of November; and, according to the founder's will, the surplus was to be applied to the repair of the parish causeway, 40s. of it being paid for the entertainment of the churchwardens and overseers when they meet for the management of the charity on the 5th of November. The poor have also the interest of £14., given by Mr. Brandon and a rent-charge of £4. on four houses at Grays was left by Wm. Hansworth in 1759, but the subsequent owner has repudiated the payment.

Pursuing our way along the range of hills—with the tract of marsh-land at their feet, and below us the watery highway of the Thames, alive with the traffic of the nations—we reach WEST THURROCK, its houses straggling for nearly a mile along the road, with its appendant hamlet of Purfleet, which, from its position upon the river, at the mouth of a creek at the west end of the parish, has in extension and activity outgrown the mother village. Here, too, the attention is attracted by the steady step of the military sentinel, for those barrack-like buildings by the harbour side are a government magazine consisting of five bomb-proof store-houses, capable of receiving 60,000 lbs. of gunpowder. Formerly a number of large corn mills stood here, and in 1680 they were the cause of much havoc to the surrounding country. By letting in the water of the Thames they produced an inundation which swept along with ruinous course, and in some cases washed from the solid earth huge trees which had lain in their subterraneous beds, as some believe, since the days of Noah, or at least since the time when the original forests, to the terror perhaps of the ancient Britons, and the wild beasts which inhabited them, were prostrated by some similar visitation. Mishaps of this kind have since been guarded against by the erection of sluices; and the government having bought the mills, built the magazine, with store-keepers' residences, and barracks for a company of artillery, in 1781. Here always slumbers a large quantity of England's thunder; and hence many vessels of war, when otherwise armed, draw it—an excellent quay being formed especially for this business. There was formerly a ferry from West Thurrock into Kent, and this was in ancient times the highway for the pilgrims from Essex and Suffolk on their way to Canterbury. The massive Saxon church of stone, upon the river bank at the east end of the parish, said to be one of the oldest of the

sacred edifices in the kingdom, is believed to have been built for their use; and around its altar bands of the foot-sore devotees have often knelt, to offer up their prayers, and buy a benediction, ere they committed themselves to the mercy of the Thames. Traces are found which some have thought indicate the existence of a monastery on the spot, but there is no record of a regular house here, and probably it was a sort of hostelry, or religious resting-place for the pilgrim train. In those times, too, when the squire was content with a beverage of his own growth, and, as some think, the climate was more favourable than now, the vine was cultivated largely on yonder hill-side; and the old manor of High-house, now occupied by Mr. Joyner, was then known as Le Vyneyard. The pilgrims are gone; the ferry has been abandoned; the vineyards have been grubbed up long ago; but this is still a delightful and romantic spot, as will be acknowledged by the visitor who, in the fresh spring or the clear summer day, ascends the beacon cliff, and looks upon the village beneath, the chalk hills with their enormous caverns, excavated by the industry of ages, the woods, seats, and farm-houses far away, and the winding Thames, which

"Visits the world, and in his flying tours,  
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours,"

with the swelling grounds of Kent bounding the prospect beyond the opposite shore.

That goodly village, almost rising to the dignity of a town, with its fine marshes and its pleasant uplands—in which we were told nearly a century ago the soil "is fit for almost anything,"—is RAINHAM. The little Ingerburn here swells out till it becomes navigable, wharves stretching by the side of the stream. As the high road from London to Tilbury Fort traverses the parish it is a place of some business—or was so before the engineer had laid down his monopolising rail. Part of the lands of the parish once belonged to the Knights Templars, but South Hall is now the property of R. W. Hall Dare, Esq., and Major Crosse is lord of the manor of Berwick. The church, a massive Norman building of stone, remarkable for its thick wall, and its curiously-wreathed doorway, had a chantry in the yard, founded by Sir John Staunton in the reign of Edward III., to secure prayers for his own family, and "the good estate of Isabel, the king's mother," but it came, from its poverty, into the hands of a layman before the reformation. The charities of Rainham are 26s. left by John Adge, in 1608, out of lands in Kent; £5. 12s. by Thomas Frith, in 1612, out of Dilly Fountains, South Weald; and

£2. 12s. by John Lowen, in 1677; these are distributed in bread. Other small charities have been lost.

We still proceed along the verge of the Thames, and here is WENNINGTON, "a marsh-land parish of scattered houses," as it has been described; but with rich pasture lands stretching out towards the river. Noke Hall, of which Sir T. B. Lennard is the lord, is planted in their midst; and Wennington Hall, the property of R. W. Hall Dare, Esq., stands with the church on the high grounds above, which afford a good view of the river, and of Erith, on the opposite shore of Kent. The church has the stamp of some antiquity about it; and upon a marble monument within is the following strange epitaph over the ashes of the Rev. H. Rust, "some time parson of this town," and his son: the medley, as it has been called, "of Latin and English sense and nonsense," is almost sufficient to make a learned child of Oxford lie uneasy in his tomb:—

"Here lies interred both father and sonne,  
For death is decreed for olde and younge,  
hodie sumus  
Cras erit in vili putre cadaver humi  
An age of care, a world of sorrow,  
Alive to day and dead to morrow."

The only charity for the poor is 20s. out of two houses in this parish and Rainham.

AVELEY.—THE SEAT OF SIR THOMAS BARRETT LENNARD.—Turning a little inland we enter the village of Aveley, the wreck and remnant of an ancient market town, and lying, it is believed, upon the line of an old Roman way. The road through the parish was formerly called Bredle Street; and, as "street" implies a Roman military way, it seems this was the highway of the imperial legions on their march from the direction of Havering to the Thames on their way to Kent. The chief object of interest in the parish at the present day is Belhus, a noble pile, which forms the seat of Sir Thomas Barrett Lennard, with its extensive park and gardens. The old manor house of Aveley, which stood at the south-east corner of the church-yard, has disappeared and left nothing but its moat. It was once the property of the De Tany's, and afterwards the residence of the Briazon family, who also held other lands here by the payment of one pound of pepper; but the manor and lands were granted by Edward VI. to St. Thomas's Hospital, which still retains them. Bumpstead, too, is down; and the moated manor-house of Bretts, which took its name from Le Bretts, its ancient owners, is dwindled down to a farm house.

Quitting the village, which at the present day bears about it

scarcely a trace of its former importance, and bending our steps about three-quarters of a mile northward, we reach the stately mansion of Belhus, or the Fair-house, as it was called 800 years ago, when it gave this name to the knightly family which then dwelt here. It stands in the midst of a noble park extending three miles around its walls, stocked with deer, and finely timbered, the vigorous trees of to-day picturesquely relieved by occasional leafless branches and whitened trunks, which under the influence of the dim twilight or the romantic moonbeam, might be taken for the ghosts of past centuries revisiting the scene. On approaching it the house appears to have been planted on low ground, and to some extent it is so; but though shut in and sheltered to the north, north-east, and westward by game covers, woods, and clustering timber, here and there the eye glances along beautiful vistas; and on turning to the southward a broad bold view opens—which is vastly extended if we climb the narrow stairs of the ancient tower—of the country up to the river bank, with the light sail or the swift steamer traversing the waters of the Thames, and the hills and high grounds of Kent far away beyond, rising as a bordering or back-ground to the landscape. Of the character of the old house when the Belhuses and the earlier Barretts dwelt here, we have no special record; but in a deed of 1397 it is described as a capital manor, with its hall and chambers adjoining, its garden, and its vineyard. The present mansion was built in the reign of Henry VIII, by John Barrett, Esq., a lawyer celebrated for eloquence in his day, who held the manor of the prior of St. John of Jerusalem.\* It is of red brick, in the pure Tudor style; and though it has been since, at different times, considerably improved and extended, all has been done with so happy a preservation of style and character, as to present one harmonious pile. It forms a quadrangle, the front being to the west, where it is entered by a fine porch, surmounted by a shield of the family arms. The whole of the north side, where the pinnacles are crowned by ancient crosses, and the tower in the centre on the south, with its tiny chambers in the various stories, are portions of the old structure which have undergone little change.

On entering the building we are reminded, as we wander through the various rooms, even by articles of furniture and

\* His will affords a curious illustration of the value of money and the state of society at that time. He had married four wives, the last the widow of a Mr. Blage; and though the lord of large possessions in various parts of the county, he is stated to have amply provided for her by the bequest of plate of the value of one hundred marks, "which," saith he, in his testamentary document, "is as moche as Mr. Blage dyd love hir to my knowledge."

the fitting up, of the fine old families of which a branch still flourishes here. There is throughout the mansion a wedding and welding of the interest of the past with the elegances of the present. In the hall we may sit down on antique-looking chairs, which have been objects of curiosity for a century or two, and look round upon memorials of the age when the cowed brow, or the helmeted head, were the only passports to importance. Battle-axe and banneret are ranged around. Here and there upon the brown antique-looking walls hang the fragments of knightly armour, or the helmet of olden chivalry, before which we are almost inclined to pause, and ask—

“ Did thy gleaming honours shine  
On the plains of Palestine ?  
Did'st thou there thy snow-plumes toss  
Proudly 'neath the blood-red cross ? ”

As we pass on, specimens of ancient carvings, rich and rare old china, scattered in almost every apartment, meet the eye. We come upon massive old cabinets, rows of family portraits, and rooms which have a history of their own ; and we feel we stand upon one of the olden hearthstones of the land—not, like too many of them, left to coldness and decay, but improved by the refinement and warm with the living freshness of the present time. As illustrations of this, we find that the late Lady Lennard added much to the interior beauty of the building by adorning the windows of the principal apartments with tastefully-painted glass, the artistic work of her own hand ; and the present baronet is fitting up an oaken room with the elaborate carvings of other ages, for which the pile affords ample and interesting materials. The walls, too, are everywhere enriched with family portraits and the paintings of the old masters. In the north dining room, in the well-stored libraries, where the visitor lingers over some rare old prints, in the noble dining room, and on the fine and massive carved oaken staircase, we come upon lines and clusters of family portraits. Amongst the finest of these are a beautiful painting of Thomas F. Dacre, on wood, by Holbein, with the heads of his lady and daughter, by Lucius de Heere, whose works are exceedingly scarce,—a remarkably fine and curious work ; Chrysogama, daughter of Sir Richard Baker, by C. De Vos, from Sir Peter Lely's collection ; Richard Lennard Lord Dacre, said to be by Vandyke ; Lord Newburgh, by Cornelius Jansen ; Thomas Lord Dacre, his lady and daughter, painted at Rome, by Pompeo Battoni ; Elizabeth, daughter of Dudley, Lord North, by Cornelius Jansen ; Anne Barbara, daughter of Thomas, Lord Dacre, by Hudson ; W. Villiers, Viscount Grandison, by Vandyke ; David Walter,

Esq., groom of the bedchamber to Charles II., by Sir Peter Lely; a fine whole-length of Henry Lennard, Lord Dacre; Paul, Viscount Baying; Sir Nicholas Carew, knight of the garter; a splendid three-quarter length of the Duchess of Cleveland, by Sir Peter Lely; Catherine, Duchess of Buckingham; Queen Elizabeth when young, soon after she came to the throne; a good likeness of the late Mrs. Lennard, the Countess of Anglesea; and a portrait of the present baronet, from the hand of Lady Wood, the mother of Lady Lennard. The other pictures include two very fine and valuable landscapes, by Albano; and at the lower end of the dining room is a large and interesting old picture, by Trevisani,—a portrait, with a landscape and shepherds dancing, on the corner of which we read the following inscription: “The grand Prior de Vendreire, brother of y<sup>e</sup> Duke de Vendome, and grandson of Cæsar de Vendome, natural son of Henry y<sup>e</sup> 4th, King of France. The gift of the Grand Prior (a token of friendship) to Lieutenant-General Charles Shelton, Grand Croix de St. Louis, and the Lady Barbara Lennard, widow of the said Charles, to her nephew, T. B. L., Anno 1740.” In the yellow drawing room, an elegant apartment, with a chaste arched and gilded roof, many of the paintings are by Lady Wood. Amongst the sleeping rooms are several which the curious and inquiring visitor would not willingly miss. Here is one with the walls and roof covered with the rich old tapestry of other days; there another with its carved oaken wainscoting, heavy bed-hangings of needle-work, and its roof divided into compartments, with a crest at every corner of the squares, forming a heraldic family history; and here, again, we enter a suite of apartments which we approach with something of reverence. These are the rooms which Queen Elizabeth occupied on the night before she appeared on horseback in the midst of her troops at Tilbury. Imagination flies back to that September evening 270 years ago, and pictures to the mind the sentinels at the door, the house filled with courtiers, the attendants watching in the ante-chamber, and the maiden Queen reposing behind those heavy bed-hangings, religiously preserved, but now growing somewhat rotten to the touch, her sleep disturbed by visions of the mighty Armada that was mustering on the waters, but her spirit awakening to schemes of resolute resistance. The furniture of the bed-room—an ancient looking-glass and two beautiful cabinets in the ante-chamber, the tables and other articles in the little dressing-room, still stand as the royal lodger left them, mementoes of an historical event whose impress is still to be seen in the character of the country. This is the purport



of the tale of the talkative attendant who guided us through the numerous apartments and winding passages of the old mansion; and, as the whisper of a doubt would evidently have brought down upon us a suspicion of atheism, or some other hideous form of unbelief, we discreetly held our peace. We did venture to doubt, notwithstanding. We do not question that Elizabeth did, on some of her excursions to the county, sojourn and sleep at Belhus—and it was worthy of a royal visit—but on the occasion of the review at Tilbury she penetrated no further inland than the river's bank. "The Queen," says the record, "landed from her barge, and was escorted to the camp by a thousand horsemen, going there and back in a state coach; staying the night in the camp, seeing a sham fight next day, and dining afterwards at noon, returning in great state to the royal barge."

The estate took its name from the family of Belhus, which flourished here in the reign of King John and Henry III., and it possesses the peculiar privilege, by special grant from the crown, of preventing any one, however high in rank or qualification, from pursuing his game over or into these lands. John Barrett, Esq., of Hawkhurst, in Kent—of a family which it is believed came in with the Conqueror, and can point to its name on the roll of Battle Abbey—acquired the property by marriage, and his successors dwelt here, taking an important part in the business of the county and the nation for two centuries. Edward Barrett, Esq., the last of the line, was knighted by King James in 1618, and at the same time he obtained the charter of free warren at Belhus, and formed a park. He was afterwards ambassador to France, a Privy Councillor of Charles I., Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Treasurer, and was created Baron Newburgh. He died at Belhus in 1644, leaving his estates to his cousin, Richard Lennard, Esq., son of Lord Dacre, on condition that he took the name of Barrett. This he did, and thus the compound name of Barrett-Lennard was formed. This family, which had been settled in Kent from the time of Henry VI., became connected by marriages with the Earls of Derby, the Mildmays, Lord Camden, and other noble houses. Thomas Barrett Lennard, Esq., succeeded to the barony of Dacre in 1755. The late venerable Sir Thomas Barrett Lennard was his natural son; he succeeded to the estates under the will of his father, and was created a baronet in 1801. The present baronet, his grandson, succeeded him in June, 1857. Thomas Barrett Lennard, Esq., who represented Maldon, never having, from the lengthened years of his father, enjoyed the family title.

The ancient church of Aveley contains several monumental brasses, one of them the figure of a warrior, with a brief inscription in Latin to Redulphus de Knevynton, who was buried in 1370. In the chancel is an ancient tomb, robbed of its inscription, but which Morant supposes, from the arms, to be that of Nicholas de Belhus, who lived in the reign of Edward I. Amongst the inscriptions to the Barrett family is the following—

"Hereunder lieth Charles Barrett, son and heere to William Barrett, Esq., who married Christian, daughter to Sir Walter Mildmay, knt., and had by her two sonnes, and one daughter. He deceased in the xxix yere of his age, viii day of August, An. Dom. 1584."

In the floor of the north aisle, in old characters, is an inscription to Edward Barrett, Esq., of the date of 1585; and against the south-wall is a fine marble monument to Dacre Barrett Lennard, Esq., but without a date.

There are three tenements in the parish of the nature of almshouses, but the Charity Commissioners state there are no documents respecting them. We find, however, they were originally built by Lord Newburgh, in 1689, and he affixed in front "Donum Dei." The inmates are nominated by Sir Thomas Barrett Lennard. In 1689, John Lewty left a rent-charge of 52s. out of Capon Hills and Tunney Mead, for thirteen penny loaves to be given to the poor at church every Sunday.

## Witham Hundred.

This hundred—or half-hundred, as it was anciently called—is a rich and fertile tract, skirted at one part by Chelmsford Hundred, the Chelmer flowing eastward along its border, and bounded on the west by the hundred of Dunmow, on the north and east by the hundreds of Hinckford, Lexden, and Thurstable, and on the south by that of Dengie. It is of a somewhat circular form, extending about nine miles each way, and includes these fourteen parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Witham .....	<i>Wit</i> , a corruption of <i>Gueth</i> , separate, and town or village—separate or lonely village	3033	3303	13168	"	235 0 0
Cressing .....	<i>Cresses</i> , and <i>ing</i> , a pasture— <i>Cresses-field</i> .....	2357	599	3226	343 0 0	257 0 0
Hatfield Peverel	<i>Heathy-field</i> , and <i>Peverel</i> —its ancient owner .....	4728	1344	10203	1599 11 8†	
Terling .....	The river <i>Ter</i> , or an ancient owner, and <i>ing</i> , pasture ...	3205	990	4887		276 17 3
Little Braxted..	The Saxon word signifying an enemy, and <i>stead</i> , a place,—lurking place of the Danes...	563	130	785	135 0 0	
Great Braxted..		2631	402	2736	618 0 0	
Kelvedon .....	The words signifying <i>spring</i> or <i>cold</i> —the hill spring, or cold hill.....	3167	1633	7866	615 0 0	331 0 0
Ulting .....	Unknown .....	1147	166	1866	187 17 6	164 13 6
Bradwell .....	<i>Broad-well</i> , a spring near the hall.....	10115	1143	7660	345 0 0	
Rivenhall .....	Raven-hall .....	3589	728	5284	950 0 0	
Faulkbourne ...	<i>Folke-well</i> , a sacred spring near the church .....	1151	184	1887	315 0 0	
Falstead .....	A fair-place .....	1853	349	2368	500 0 0‡	
White Notley...	The Saxon word <i>Nut</i> , and <i>ley</i> , a meadow— <i>Nut-field</i> .....	2228	515	3331	248 13 6	254 0 0
Black Notley ...		1936	527	2809	497 0 0	

\* The rectory is held on lease; the lessee receives £320 in lieu of tithes. The vicarage is valued at £478, with 103 acres of glebe.

† Of this sum £1,474. 19s. 10d. is received from the parish; £36. 9s. 2d. from Ulting; £75. 18s. 10d. from Witham; £5. 18s. 6d. from Little Baddow; and £0. 5s. 4d. from Borcham. The benefice is a discharged vicarage.

‡ The tithe on 84 acres of glebe is included.

The Hundred has been described as “one of the pleasantest and most fertile divisions of Essex;” and its good and varying soil, with the rich vales through which flow the Blackwater and the little streams of the Brain and the Ter, are proofs that this character has not been lightly bestowed. There are no records of its very early settlement; but its situation on the great military highway, and relics of the imperial rulers that have been found within its borders, are signs that it was not altogether unknown to the Romans; and its proximity to the strongholds and haunts of the Danes render it probable that the first buds of civilization which had begun to sprout amidst its forest lands were often trodden down by those fierce marauders.

WITHAM, the capital of the Hundred, owes, in fact, its origin as a town to the precautions taken to guard against the incursions which these sea-robbers were accustomed to make from amidst the creeks and marshy fastnesses of Dengie. The ancient Britons, it is clear, had encamped in the pleasant spots of the forest hereabouts. Cinerary urns of that people, pronounced to be two thousand years old, have been exhumed in the fields of the neighbourhood within the last fifteen years. But the old Saxon Chronicle records with great distinctness that in 918, "in the summer, betwixt gong-day (Ascension) and Midsummer, King Edward came with some of his forces into Essex to Mældune, and abode there while men worked and built a town at Witham. And a good deal of the folks submitted to him that were before under the dominion of the Danes." This, however, has little to do with what is popularly known as the modern town of Witham. That is a younger offshoot of the tree planted by the Saxon soldiers of King Edward's army. The works referred to were undoubtedly at Chipping Hill, a mile to the northward. A circular camp was clearly to be traced there in the last century; and though the levelling pick-axe and the busy plough have obliterated many of its lines, enough remains of rampart and earthwork to satisfy us that this was the spot where the military foundations of ancient Witham were laid. Gough, indeed, has attributed these works to the Romans; others, upon the faith of a stray coin or two, gave support to the opinion; but the railway navvie, when he came to assault the hill for the formation of his line, settled the question by the report that his pick had not brought to light a single weapon or other fragmentary record to sustain the theory. Old Witham, then, was raised by the son of Alfred, 946 years ago, on a spot which probably, from its state of cultivation, required protection, and to resist the march of the intruder beyond the banks of the little stream which still flows picturesquely through the meadows below. Under shelter of this security the town no doubt grew apace. The houses increased; a church was built, as circumstances appear to indicate, on the spot occupied by the present sacred edifice. A market was established on the hill which takes its name from the Saxon word Ceping, meaning a "place of merchandize;" and, a sad proof of the light manner in which our ancestors regarded the sanctity of the Sabbath, it was for a long time held upon the Sunday. The chief manor of Witham, or Newlands, which now belongs to Charles Du Cane, Esq., M.P., was in the possession of King Harold; it was retained by the Conqueror; and afterwards came to the great Earl of Boulogne, when it was

one of the four ancient honours in the kingdom, which possessed peculiar distinctions and privileges. It was given by King Stephen and his Queen Maud, together with the Hundred, to the Knights Templars, on whose suppression it passed to the Knights Hospitallers; and being brought again into royal hands by the Reformation, it was sold by Charles I. to Henry Smyth, alias Neville, of Cressing Temple. Morant records this extraordinary custom as belonging to the manor—

“The owners of all the freehold land must pay one year's full yearly value of those lands upon every death and alienation in certain, for a fine to the lord, unless such owner shall be born within that manor to which his lands belong, according to the custom of the said manor; and he is called a purchaser within the manor, and must pay a fine for his first purchase; but if such purchaser be born within the manor wherein his lands lie, he pays no fine, but a relief to the lord, which is a double quit-rent. There are likewise many copyholders, and several leaseholders, who hold by a copy of court roll for a term of years, granted by the lord *ex-gratia*, for longer or shorter terms of years, as the lord chooses, paying to him what fine he pleases.”

There was also another remarkable tenure in this parish, as it appears by the record of legal proceedings at Chelmsford in the thirty-ninth of Henry III. that Geoffrey de Lyston held land in Witham by the serjeantry of carrying flour to make wafers on the king's birthday whenever his Majesty was in the kingdom. There were four other ancient manors in the parish—Powers' Hall, now belonging to J. A. Wigan, Esq.; Blunts Hall, (once owned by Bulstrode Whitlock, Commissioner of the Great Seal under Oliver Cromwell,) to Lord Rayleigh; and Howbridge Hall, to the family of Samuel and Stephen Pitt, Esqrs. The vicarage, too, was invested with this dignity, under the not very high sounding title of Hog-end, so called, it has been conjectured, from its being the place where the lord fed his hogs in those seasons of the year when they could not be fattened upon the acorns of the surrounding forest. The vicar was the lord, holding his leet and court baron, the other manors paying 4d. to him and doing their homage; but in modern times the tribute has been unpaid and the honour forgotten. Bacons, or Witham place, by the road-side, beyond Chipping Hill, though not invested with manorial rights, was a place of some importance in ancient days. The owner, who stamped his name upon it, gave it to the Abbey of St. John's of Colchester, in the reign of Edward I.; it had its Roman Catholic chapel attached to it, and in the last century and the beginning of the present it was occupied by noble members of that faith—the Stourtons and the Talbots. It was the property of the late Mr. R. Bretnall, by whom the whole was demolished save the drawing room, which is used as a store-house; the trees have been cut down, the beautiful

grounds laid waste ; and to those who once knew it as the home of nobles, it presents a melancholy scene.

For ages the population of Witham remained clustered around Chipping Hill. As, however, the country became more civilized and secure, the present town grew up by the side of the highway. In 1380 it had attained so much importance that the prior of St. John, as lord of the manor, obtained a license to hold the market—which in the time of Henry III. had been changed from the Sabbath day to Wednesday—in Newland-street, as well as at the old site. Subsequently the market day has been changed to Tuesday. From this time the hamlet proceeded gradually to draw off the trade of the town. Hostelries arose to accommodate the passing traffic ; dwellings were erected in the quaint style of the age, with their gables to the street ; and Chipping Hill was in time abandoned even by the lord, who built his manor-house in the centre of the present town. At one period the bay and say, or woollen cloth trade, was carried on largely at Witham, and the mansion-house at the end of the town, called The Grove, was built by Mr. Barwell, who had amassed a fortune in that business. The town is mentioned in acts of parliament for regulating the production and sale of these fabrics ; but all trace of this manufacture has long since perished from its borders. The assizes, too, were held here in 1568—why, has not been explained ; but we know these courts were occasionally migratory, and it is probable that there was some great cause between local parties, or some fearful crimes had been committed in the immediate neighbourhood, which it was thought most convenient to try upon the spot. It is proof, however, that Witham was then regarded as one of the chief towns of the county. A great change appears to have come over the character of the houses in the last century (1737), by the discovery of a mineral spring, which was represented by a Dr. Taverner to be of surpassing power in the cure of a variety of diseases ; and speculators built a pump-room, and reared lodging-houses, for the crowds of patients who were expected to flock to it for relief. The Rev. J. Bramston, in his “Lectures on Old Witham,” says—

“A spacious spa-room was once seen in the field opposite Spa-place, where patients went to drink the water ; and afterwards, according to the custom of the time, kept up their spirits by public breakfasts and dancing, at which the neighbouring families attended ; the house where Mr. Walford resides provided coffee and other refreshments for the visitors, and Witham was spoken of as a watering-place. But the whole scheme we know failed, and the only memorials of it are, first, Dr. Taverner’s book, which is only preserved by those who care for notices of Witham ; secondly the spa-place, which is, I believe, a kind of posthumous erection, and which certainly is not a place of fashionable resort, as my excellent friend, the present occupier, is not sorry to acknowledge ;

and lastly, the mineral spring itself, covered over with earth, and which I suppose not five persons in the parish would be able to discover. Before that time I suppose Witham must have been a singularly picturesque town, irregularly built, and at different times, with deep roofs, narrow gables, and projecting stories; it must have looked what it was, an ancient but unpretending county town; but it then aspired to be more, to be a second Bath or Cheltenham, to be a smirk and brisk watering-place, where antiquity was out of place, and the fashion of the day was alone to be countenanced."

Witham is now a clean and handsome country town, with some picturesque scenes and pleasant walks around it, including a stately avenue of limes leading from the town-end to Chipping Hill and the railway station, where the houses of a hamlet are again extending over the site of the ancient burgh of Edward the Elder.

The mother church of St. Nicholas stands at Chipping Hill, and parts of it at least are very ancient. The older portions of the wall are built of Roman bricks and flint. The beautiful door-way which now forms the chief entrance to the church is believed to have been erected at the time King Stephen and Queen Maud gave the church to the canons of St. Martin's-le-grand, and to have been preserved on the rebuilding of the sacred edifice by the Knights of St. John, when, on the destruction of the Templars, they came into possession of the manor.\* It has at various times undergone changes—a sweeping one in the last century, when church restoration was understood to mean a ruthless application of whitewash and plaster; but modern taste and devotion have to some extent remedied this, and in the edifice will be found much to interest the architect and the antiquarian. The most ancient monuments in the church are of the sixteenth century. One is a large tomb, with the figures of a man and a woman, erected on the north side of the chancel, to John Heathcote, who was one of the Judges in the reign of Elizabeth, and the owner of Witham Place. The next, on the north side of the chancel, of the date of 1598, which bears marks of the barbarous mutilation of Cromwell's day, is of white marble, erected to Sir Thomas Neville, whose family long possessed the chief manor here; and the knight in armour and his lady are seen kneeling at an altar. Here, too, are various inscriptions to the East family, the first of them to William East, of the Middle Temple, concluding, observed a satirical tourist nearly a hundred years ago, "with such fulsome compliments to the deceased, that however great his merit was I think he must be exceedingly hurt if he could just raise his head and read his own eulogium." The large Latin inscription on the Barwell monument in the chancel, of the date of 1697, will also attract the attention of the visitor, but it is

\* Bramston's Lectures on Old Witham.



merely a record of family names and filial sorrow. In Roman catholic times there were two chantries in the church, one founded in 1397, at the altar of St. John the Baptist, for a chaplain to say daily prayers for Lady De Bohun; the other, dedicated to St. Mary, for a priest to sing mass daily. Both were well endowed, but they were seized, and the property passed to secular owners, in the time of Edward VI.

A handsome new church, in the early English style, was built in Guithavon-street, then newly formed, near the centre of the town, in 1842, at a cost of £5,000, raised by subscription. The site was given by W. H. Pattisson, Esq., of a family which has done much for the advancement of the town, and has been settled here for more than 200 years. A large national school has since risen up near it, and the rent of a house at Chipping Hill, left by Lady Barnardiston, in 1681, is applied towards its support. There is also a British school in Maldon-road, erected in 1839, at a cost of £850.

Witham is well provided with almshouses. There are five in Bridge-street for ten poor widows, endowed by an unknown donor with Wally Tye, of 51A. 30P. in Fairsted and White Notley, and Scott's and Mott's, of 45A. 37P. in Goldhanger, so that the inmates have a stipend of £1 monthly, 4s. half-yearly, and an allowance for wood and coal; besides this, two of the occupants have the dividends of £200. Bank Annuities, left by John Poole, in 1824. Green's almshouses at Chipping Hill were founded by John Green, in 1491, the donor leaving Browne's farm of 30 acres, at Springfield, half the proceeds of which go to the church, and half to these houses, so that the four poor widows who inhabit them receive 2s. 6d. a week, 2s. 6d. quarterly, and an allowance for coals. Armond's almshouses, in Blunt's Hall lane, were founded by George Armond, in 1627; they are endowed with rent-charges on houses in the town, amounting to £4. 10s.; they consist of three rooms, and are occupied by two poor women. Harvey's almshouses, on the north of the town, consisting of six dwellings, were given by Mr. Barnard Harvey in 1810, for poor members of the Independent congregation, but the only endowment is the rent of a house at Chipping Hill, left by Thomas Isaac in 1812, out of which the inmates have half a chaldron of coals each. The sum of £100, left by Lady Barnardiston in 1682, for the distribution of twelve penny loaves weekly at the church, has been increased with £20 of the town stock, and laid out in the purchase of six acres of land and a house at Chipping Hill, formerly used as the workhouse; of the proceeds, £5. 4s. is given in bread, and the remainder goes to the poor-rates. The

Rev. Dr. Warley, in 1719, left £50 for bread for six poor widows, but this money was expended in rebuilding the steeple, and the £2. 12s. for the bread is now paid out of the parish rates.

**HATFIELD PEVEREL AND PRIORY.**—Two miles from Witham, on the road to Chelmsford,—having passed by the way Witham Lodge, the neat mansion of Captain Luard—the traveller enters Hatfield Peverel, and looks down from the hill-top on Hatfield Place, the residence of the Tyrell family before they purchased Boreham House; while further on, beyond the water mill and the river Ter, lies Crix (the seat of the late Samuel Shaen, Esq., now the residence of R. D. Heatley, Esq.,) with its park skirting the road, and the house, commanding a pleasant prospect to the south, over the vale of the Chelmer. Away to the right is Toppingo-Hall, taking its name from Thomas de Toppingho, who owned it in the reign of Henry III., now the property of Lord Rayleigh; the house is well-known for the fine cedars round it, and the farm was long famed for its fox-covers. Amongst the ancient owners of property here was Thomas, the son of Geoffrey Chaucer, the poet, who held a part of the manor of Hatfield in the reign of Henry VI., and left it, in 1486, to Alice Chaucer, his daughter. Besides the noble owner of Toppingo, John Wright and G. B. M. Lovibond, Esqrs., and the Rev. C. G. G. Townsend, are now the lords of the parish, which contains little of historical note beyond the memory and the slight remains of the priory. Turning to the left from the high road, about the centre of the straggling village, we reach the site on which, eight hundred years ago, the walls of this monastic house were raised, and we behold the only remnant left of it—the parish church. Hatfield Priory owed its foundation to one of those qualms of conscience which in those times often led to similar architectural offerings as bribes to the recording angel to blot out the entries of old sins. Soon after the Norman conqueror had seized the English throne he was in turn taken captive by a fair Saxon, the daughter of Ingelric, a noble, a lady of extraordinary beauty. Kings and conquerors do not woo in vain. The beautiful Saxon maiden became the concubine of the royal Norman, and the mother of a boy who was afterwards one of the barons of the kingdom and the owner of Nottingham Castle. The monarch, however, grew weary of his fair mistress, and accordingly married her to Ralph Peverel, one of his followers, whom he loaded with lordships as a reward for taking the beautiful but tainted one to his home. Amongst the possessions thus acquired was this manor of Hatfield. As years rolled on, and

“ Wrinkling age with ruffian hand  
Had marred her youthful graces,”

the lady—her royal lover being dead—bethought herself of her early frailties, and as a religious atonement of them founded a college here for secular canons, dedicating it to the repentant Mary Magdalen. The lady herself resided here, keeping an eye over the holy brotherhood till her death, which took place about the year 1100, and she was buried in the church, where, says Weever, in his "Funeral Monuments," "her image, cut in stone, is to be seen in one of the windows." The house did not long retain its secular character. William Peverel, the son of the foundress, in the time of Henry I., about 20 years after, converted it into a priory of Benedictines, subordinate to St. Alban's Abbey, giving his own mansion as a dwelling for the monks; he also added to its previous endowments three fields near the church, and amongst other property in various districts the advowson of Little Waltham, and tithes in Bradwell, Little Baddow, Ulting, Witham, Terling, and Boreham. The greater portion of the priory was destroyed by fire in 1381, but it appears to have been rebuilt; and here the community, which consisted of a prior and four monks, dwelt in ease till the Reformation, when the chant was silenced, and the sound of the priory bell was heard no more in Hatfield. Its revenues then amounted to £88. 19s. 7d., which passed from Richard Snowdall, the last prior, to the crown. In 1537, Henry VIII. granted the priory and its property to Giles Leigh, of Walton Lodge, in Surrey, from whom it passed to the Alleyn family, one of whom, Sir John, was sheriff of London in 1518, and "gave a rich collar of gold to be worn by the successive Lord Mayors." John Wright, Esq., is now the owner of this property, and as the successor and representative of the old prior, he receives the tithes, which afford a striking proof of the increase in the value of property, as a part only of the revenue of £88. 19s. 7d. in 1540 now produces £1,599. 11s. 8d. In 1768 the estate was sold under a decree of the Court of Chancery, when it was purchased by J. Wright, Esq. The new owner forthwith demolished the ancient manor or priory house, the old home of the Benedictines, which stood near the church, and reared in its stead yonder elegant mansion, now occupied by his descendants, with its beautiful sheet of water and its broad park, extending along the road-side a quarter of a mile below, and, under the name of Priory Place, is the modern representative of the former monastic institution.

The original parish church stood on an eminence near the river, between Hatfield Bury and Terling; but wall and roof, altar and aisle, have long since disappeared. The green mounds beneath which the rustic fathers slept have been levelled; and

the name of Church Field is all that preserves the memory of its site. The parishioners now worship in the Norman church of the priory, which has been much changed in character by alterations and restorations; but the interior is kept in good order, and with its fine windows filled with richly-stained glass, is a neat and even elegant modern temple. The figure of Ingelrica, the foundress, still reposes on the window-sill on the north of the chancel; and on the floor are various inscriptions to members of the Alleyn family. Amongst them, on a brass on the ground, beneath the effigies of a man and his family, appears a long and rather rough specimen of the funeral poetry of the sixteenth century, but now hidden from sight and almost obliterated.

There are four well-endowed almshouses in the parish, comfortable dwellings with gardens, built in 1820, by Martha Lovibond, who left £5,270. Three per Cent. Consols for their support: two are for married couples who receive 18s. a week each, and two for single persons at 12s. each, with 5s. for each inmate on the 5th of August. The surplus of the dividends, it was provided, should be paid to the rector of Chelmsford for the relief of prisoners in the gaol, or their families. The other charities consist of a house and nine acres of land at Totham, and a house and three acres at Wickham, bought in 1671, with £100. left by Sir Edward Alleyn, Bart., in 1638, for schooling and apprenticing poor children, and £38. added from the poor's money; two houses at Hatfield Green, granted in 1657 by John and Margaret Tregett for £22.; one acre and a quarter at Boreham, granted by John Alleyn in 1671, for £17 of the parish stock: and three acres of land at Little Baddow, granted by John Rust and Thomas Saffold, in 1677, for £69 of the poor's money. Besides these there are several pieces of land in the parish, the building used as the old work-house, and the dwellings, with gardens, which are inhabited as almshouses by the poor of the parish,—the whole property being vested in trustees, who pay £5 to a schoolmistress, and the remainder of the proceeds is distributed in bread and coals.

TERLING.—THE SEAT OF LORD RAYLEIGH.—After glancing to the south of Hatfield over the little parish of Ulting, with its lands mostly belonging to G. B. M. Lovibond, Esq., extending down to the Chelmer, whose stream bounds the yard of its small early English stone church, we return to the high road and strike into the rural district in the opposite direction. About two miles bring us to the parish of Terling, “pleasant in its situation and rich in its soil,” as the old topographers

describe it. Near the village, some of whose houses have a quaint air of old antiquity about them, stands Terling Place, the seat of Lord Rayleigh, the owner of the manors and much of the lands of the parish. This manor was once, as we have already seen, a palace of the Bishops of Norwich and the resort of Henry VIII. When the Conqueror came he found this estate in the possession of the abbey of Eley, but the good monks lost it for having the humanity to give shelter to some fugitives who were flying from his sword. The manor fell into the overloaded lap of Ralph Peverel, from whom it passed to the Bohuns; and "The Bruce," too, appears to have had a footing in Terling, for on his assuming the Scottish sceptre, two knights' fees here were seized by the crown. The bishops of Norwich, however, held under the lords paramount as early as 1269. The prelates formed Terling Place into an episcopal palace, planted the grounds, extended the park, and possessed a chapel with the right of sanctuary, to which it is said—but we think mistakingly—Hubert de Burgh fled from the wrath of Henry III. The property having passed back to the crown by exchange, Henry VIII., in 1536, granted it to Lord Chancellor Audley. Twenty-seven years afterwards it was sold to Thomas Mildmay, Esq., of Moulsham, subsequently to Thomas Western, Esq., of Rivenhall; and in 1761 it was purchased by John Strutt, Esq., who laid the foundation of the noble family of Rayleigh on the spot on which it now flourishes. It appears that the house of Strutt draws its blood from the "land of cloud-capp'd piny mountains," Switzerland, where its founder, Godfried Strutz de Hinkelred, of Under Walden, flourished as chief of the Swiss auxiliaries in 1240, and received the honor of knighthood when the charter of freedom was granted to the Helvetic confederacy. In the dissensions and struggle which followed, he sought an asylum in England; and from him descended Sir Denner Strutt, of Little Warley, who was knighted and created a baronet in 1640. Sir Denner, as a staunch royalist, took the field against Fairfax, and was killed at the siege of Colchester. On his death the Rev. Mr. Strutt, of Terling, became the representative of the family, and he was the direct ancestor of Major-General Strutt, who was governor of Quebec, and of Colonel Strutt, the father of the present Lord. Colonel Strutt married a daughter of the Duke of Leinster, and this lady having been made a peeress in 1821, on the death of his mother in 1836 the Hon. John James Strutt became Baron Rayleigh.

The Terling Place of the present day presents little to interest the antiquarian. There is not even a cob-webbed corner of the

old palace left in which he can luxuriate. He will be told, indeed, that gold and silver coins and rings of the Romans have been dug up on the domain ; but the rooms in which the royal reformer sat on his occasional visits have been demolished—of the chapel of sanctuary, to which the criminal fled for safety, there is not a stone left upon a stone. In place of the ancient palace we find a spacious and elegant modern mansion of white brick, with two extensive wings, built by John Strutt, Esq., and, with the grounds about it, considerably improved at subsequent periods, especially by the present noble owner. The interior is fitted up with the chaste elegance of good taste. This the visitor will admit when he crosses the threshold into the entrance-hall, and his pleased eye rests upon fine casts of the Elgin marbles, which adorn the front of a gallery running round the whole of the apartment—when he contemplates the principal staircase, framed after the model of the Beaurégard, at Paris—or passes onward and looks upon the beautifully-ornamented roof of the spacious drawing-room. In the library adjacent are some fine busts; and in a room of the west wing, amongst other paintings, some of them by Dutch artists, the attention is arrested by four splendid pictures of Canaletti, representing scenes in the streets of Florence during the carnival; they are in the first style of that master. Wandering back to the opposite wing, in the great dining-room we find the walls nearly covered with family portraits. Here is a good likeness of Madame Strutt—a fine old painting of the late Lady Rayleigh; the father and grandfather of Lord Rayleigh; Mrs. Anne Strutt, the Hon. Mrs. Drummond; two portraits of the Hon. Miss Strutt, one in her juvenile days and the other in ripe womanhood; the Duke of Leinster, by the hand of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and, near by, the two royal Charles's—from whom, we believe, the ducal house claims descent—by Vandyke, from whose easel there is, too, a beautiful little picture of his own wife.

Without, we find ourselves on a pleasant spot, around which memories of “the old gray past” will naturally cling. The mansion stands on an eminence in a well-wooded park of between 200 and 800 acres, through which the little river Ter winds modestly along, pleasant views stretching to the south and eastward over the neighbouring woodlands and the vales of the surrounding country. In the front, towards the village, slopes a space of level lawn, beyond which rises a green terrace; and beyond this, again, as if springing from amidst the shrubs and trees of the plantations, are seen the roof and spire of the parish church, presenting a sweetly picturesque scene to the eye.



The church affords a noble proof of the pious munificence of the noble patron, who within the last few years has expended about £1,000 in its partial rebuilding and restoration. It contains a few antique brasses and olden inscriptions, and in the north chapel is the family vault of the Strutt family. The greater part of the steeple fell down more than a century and a quarter ago; a Latin inscription on a stone on the west side informs us that it did so being very old, and that after lying in ruins two years it was rebuilt in 1732 by Anthony Gould; John Scott and Daniel Stammers being then churchwardens. The parochial school is endowed with an annuity of £15 out of Troys Farm, granted by Col. Strutt in 1820, in establishment of a bequest by Benjamin Joscelyn in 1775, which was void under the Mortmain Act; the rents of two cottages and a building are applied to the repair of the church; and about £80 a year is received by Lord Rayleigh from Smith's charity (noticed elsewhere) for distribution in clothing to the poor who do not receive parochial relief.

**FAIRSTEAD.**—From Terling, along the northern verge of the Hundred, stretches a pleasant rural tract, with its farm-houses and fertile fields, but presenting little to arrest the step of the antiquarian or to employ the historic pen. Fairstead, with its hills and woodlands, is a pleasant parish; its manors are owned by Lord Rayleigh, and Walley's Hall, the mansion of one of them, appears to be an ancient edifice. It is surrounded by a moat, and had formerly belonging to it a thatched chapel, called Lady Wydeline's, a proof of its ancient importance. Roger de Rydil gave the patronage of the living to the Bishop of London in 1221, and with him it has remained ever since. The principal mansion in the parish is that of the Rev. J. Cox, which is a large and handsome dwelling. The church is a small building, in good repair; its antiquity being attested by the Roman bricks mingled amongst the stone of its tower. The poor have the interest of £227. 5s. 6d. Three per Cent. Consols, left by James Carter, in 1828, for distribution in coals.

**THE NOTLEYS.**—**THE TOMB OF RAY.**—Adjacent to this parish, and running nearly up to Braintree, lie the Notleys, Black and White, which in early times made but one village or township. J. F. Wright, Esq. of Kelvedon Hatch, is now lord of White Notley Hall, one of his ancestors having bought the estate of Lord Vaux for £2,500, in the sixteenth century. The manor of Black Notley belongs to D. B. Hanbury, Esq. The churches are Norman, and that of White Notley contains in its chancel a highly decorated piscina of the style of Edward III. Black Notley is remarkable for having been the birth-place of



two of our Essex worthies—the good Bishop Bedell and the naturalist and philosopher, John Ray.

William Bedell, whose name will long be preserved in the history of our divines, and in the traditions of Ireland, was born here in 1570, and at the age of fourteen matriculated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He took holy orders “from the suffragan Bishop of Colchester,” as his biographer informs us, and was for a time at Bury St. Edmund’s. Afterwards he went as chaplain of the British Ambassador at Venice. It was in Ireland, however, that he established a claim to be remembered amongst the great and the good. In 1627 he was elected Provost of Trinity College, Dublin; and two years after he was made Bishop of Kilmore. In this capacity his loving demeanour won the hearts of the Irish peasantry; and his translation of the Scriptures into the Irish language did much to promote amongst them the spread of the Protestant faith. In so much veneration was he held, that for a time his person was respected in the midst of a fierce rebellion; but he was afterwards seized and confined, the rigour of his imprisonment hastening his death, which took place on the 7th of Feb. 1641, at the age of seventy-one.

John Ray, the great naturalist, the Christian philosopher, and the founder of the true principles of classification in the vegetable and animal kingdom, was the son of a blacksmith in this village. He was born the 29th of Nov., 1627. Evincing signs of native talent, instead of being placed at the forge he was sent to a grammar school at Braintree; from thence he removed to Cambridge, where he was elected a Fellow of Trinity College, and at the age of twenty-three he became Greek lecturer, and soon after mathematical reader. Wandering in the fields during a period of illness, he appears to have set in earnest to the investigation of natural history, and in conjunction with his friend Willoughby, he became one of the lights of the world on this subject. It has been said of him that—“He was unquestionably the first who reduced the science of botany to a system, and thus paved the way for that brilliant completion of the artificial arrangement which was left for the immortal Swede to perfect. Ray indeed may be looked upon as the founder of scientific order in this department: he found Nature a trackless wilderness, but his genius and perseverance reduced her beauties to a methodical plan.” He travelled over the greater part of England, Wales, and the continent, prosecuting his researches and his favourite study, afterwards giving the results to the public, in his *History of Insects*, and other works, his descriptions having been characterized by high

authority as masterpieces of clearness and precision. Ray is an encouraging proof to the children of "the people"—those not born to wealth or the means of readily acquiring knowledge—of how worth and well-applied talent can work its way: this poor boy, of obscure birth and humble parentage, emerging from his Essex village, became, as a Fellow of the Royal Society, the friend and associate of the most eminent men of the age. Quiet, however, as was the tenor of his way, he became a victim of the religious spirit of the time. He had taken holy orders on the Restoration, but refusing to comply with the act of uniformity, he resigned, and lost his fellowship. In 1672 his friend Willoughby died, leaving him £60. a year, and appointing him guardian to his two sons—a trust which he faithfully executed. In 1678 he married a lady, twenty-four years younger than himself, and had three daughters by her. He retired first to Faulk-bourn Hall, and then to this his native village, where he died, in January, 1704, at the age of seventy-seven. His writings were numerous, but his greatest work was, perhaps, "The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation," which breathes a spirit of christian piety, and is full of philosophical detail. His tomb, which stands in the churchyard—an object of interest to learned pilgrims, a party of whom came from London some years since to visit it—is a square pedestal monument. It was erected at the sole cost of the Right Rev. Henry Compton, Bishop of London, and bears a long Latin inscription, of which the following is a translation—

" Hid in this narrow tomb, this marble span,  
Lies all that death could snatch from this great man ;  
His body moulders in its native clay,  
While o'er wide worlds his works their beams display,  
As bright and everlasting as the day.  
To those just fame ascribes immortal breath,  
And in his writings he outlives his death.  
Of every science every part he knew,  
Read in all arts divine and human too ;  
Like Solomon, (and Solomon alone,  
We as a greater king of knowledge own)  
Our modern sage dark nature's secrets read,  
From the tall cedar to the hyssop's bed ;  
From the unwieldiest beast of land or deep  
To the least insect that has power to creep ;  
Nor did his artful labors only show  
Those plants which on the earth's wide surface grow,  
But piercing e'en her darkest entrails through,  
All that was wise, all that was great, he knew,  
And nature's inmost gloom made clear to common view.  
From foreign shores his learning brought supplies,  
Exposing treasures hid from other eyes,  
Loading his single mind to make his country wise.  
But what's yet more, he was so meekly great  
That envy, unrepining, saw his state ;

For, rare accomplishments ! his humble mind  
 Possessed a jewel which it could not find.  
 A great descent lent nothing to his fame,  
 Virtue, not birth, distinguished his high name :  
 Titles and wealth he never strove to gain ;  
 Those he would rather merit than obtain.  
 His private life in humble shades he spent,  
 Worthy a palace, with a cell content ;  
 Unwearied he would knowledge still pursue,  
 The only thing in which no mean he knew ;  
 What more did add to these bright gifts we find  
 A pure untainted piety of mind.  
 England's blest church engrossed his zealous care,  
 A truth his dying accents did declare.  
 Thus lost he in retirement his great breath—  
 Thus died he living who thus lives in death—  
 Thus has heaven called his age's glory home  
 And the bright wonder of the age to come."

The poor of White Notley have the rents of two acres and three roods of land, and three cottages and gardens left by Major Whitebread, which are distributed in bread to widows and widowers, and £10 from the dividend of £666. 13s. 4d. Three per Cent. Consols, left by Jeffrey Grimwood, Esq. of Cressing Temple, in 1840. In Black Notley the rents of two houses in Braintree and Bocking, left by John Coker, in 1702, are applied, £8 to a schoolmaster for ten free scholars, and the remainder is divided amongst poor widows not receiving parochial relief; a rent-charge of £10 from houses in St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, left by Mary Kitchen, in 1722, is distributed at Michaelmas and Christmas.

CRESSING, which adjoins White Notley on the west, is a scattered rural village, somewhat distinguished from those around it by the foot-prints of the rich Templars and the warrior monks of St. John, which can still be faintly traced upon its soil. When, in 1150, King Stephen granted the Hundred to the Knights Templars, they fixed upon this as a pleasant spot, whereon to found one of their cells or preceptories, of which they possessed sixteen in England, that of Cressing standing at the head of the list. For upwards of 150 years men eminent in this order of religious soldiers were lords of the village, the lands, and the church, which was long regarded as a chapel of Witham ; and they ruled in state at the old manor-house, which thus acquired the title of Cressing Temple. When the sword-blades which had flashed through the Paynim hosts had become dimmed by the accusation of hideous crimes, and the growing jealousy of kings and prelates at the vast wealth and power of the order had led to its suppression and sent its leaders to the stake, Cressing, with their other possessions in England, passed to the kindred fraternity

of the hospitallers of St. John. These knights held it till the Reformation. It soon after passed to the Smyths, an old Essex family which long flourished at the Temple, and left its name upon Smyth's Hall at Blackmore. The manor now belongs to Captain Strutt. The preceptory or temple, about a mile south of the church, at the time when the white robes and the red cross of the knights were seen there, was a very extensive building, with its appendant chapel, which, so late as 1626, was used for divine service; but the greater part of it has been demolished. The home of the vowed warriors has become a farm-house; the ploughshare has literally superseded the sword; and some carved wainscoting within the dwelling, and part of a moat without, appear to be nearly the only fragments left of the olden temple. The church of Cressing is ancient, but has undergone many alterations, which have swept away most of its early features. The poor have £10. from the bequest of Jeffrey Grimwood, Esq., as noticed in White Notley.

**FAULKBOURN.**—**THE SEAT OF J. BULLOCK, ESQ.**—The grounds and gardens of Glazenwood, extending to fifty-two acres, will tempt the traveller to stray into the little parish of Bradwell.\* At the Park House, now parkless, the seat of M. P. C. Brunwin, Esq., the lord of the manor, he will find some good paintings; in the little antique church some splendid monuments to the Mascys, one of whom (Sir Anthony) took a leading part in the siege of Colchester. And now, having reached the verge of the Hundred, within three miles of Braintree, we retrace our steps by the road towards Witham, and enter Faulkourn by the way. There are only a few scattered houses, but it appears to have been an inhabited spot in very early times, as a wall, partly of Roman brick, and a coin of Domitian turned up from beneath its foundation, are considered to mark it as the site of a Roman villa. The Hall, the seat of J. Bullock, Esq., the lord of the parish, now monopolizes all the historic interest of the scene. It stands in a park of nearly three hundred acres, well wooded and watered and stocked with the dappled deer; and in one part of the grounds a majestic cedar, considered to be the largest in the kingdom, the body being nineteen feet in girth, spreads its ample shade. The mansion, which is regarded as one of the finest specimens of gothic and ornamental brick-work in the kingdom, is a massive pile of red brick, with an elegant front—a modern restoration of the original structure—with lofty towers and battlements, whose origin is lost in the mist that gathers on the

\* The only charity in Bradwell consists of the Poor's Land, given by an unknown donor; and since added to by allotment, comprising seven acres two roods, the rent of which is distributed amongst those who do not receive parish relief.

path of time. A little to the right of the mansion, and within the bounds of the park, the village church "tops the neighbouring hill;" and still nearer rises St. German's spring—in days of yore of great repute—round whose brink the way-worn pilgrim and the penitent bowed, and the maiden offered her virgin vow;—the worship of wells and springs being in early days a very general practice, and even in the thirteenth century we find ecclesiastical decrees and injunctions against it. The original mansion, which till within a century was moated on every side, was evidently of very ancient date, and much of it yet remains. The old Norman towers still rise in their strength and grandeur, firm and unshaken as when, in the days of feudal rule, they carried at once awe and protection to the country around, or echoed the cry of the hunter band, and the war-notes of the mustering vassals. Time has been silently labouring for centuries to pick away the foundation of what the tempest and the foeman spared, yet the towers of Faulkourn stand erect; and modern taste has combined with the stern features of a bygone age the air of ease and the character of elegance which beseemeth the home of the English squire. Various styles of architecture are mingled in the building as taste or convenience suggested alterations, yet still, as every gathering year drives its storms over the late additions, they gradually harmonise into a stately whole. The building is supposed to have been erected by Earl Gloucester in the reign of Stephen, according to which it is about seven centuries old. If so, probably it was one of those fortified mansions with which the nobles filled the land with the reluctant acquiescence of that monarch, and it might have been only partially destroyed when the demolishing edict of the succeeding Henry went forth to level these buildings with the ground. This conjecture is sustained by the evidence which the spade and the pickaxe have at times produced, brickwork and foundations having been laid bare, which prove that the edifice once extended over a much larger space than it at present occupies. It first passed into the possession of the ancient family which at present holds it in 1637, when John Fortescue, Esq., sold it to Sir Edward Bullock, of Great Totham. This gentleman had been knighted by James the First eighteen years before, but the family for centuries previously had been honourably known to fame, and had spread out its branches to various parts of the kingdom. In 1835, we learn from the historian, Dr. William Bullock was one of the negociators of peace between England and Scotland; in the reign of Henry the Sixth five of the family were returned to that monarch as gentlemen; in the early part

of the sixteenth century Dr. Henry Bullock, the friend of Erasmus and the *protégé* of Wolsey, ranked high amongst the learned of his time ; and another was sheriff of Berkshire in the reign of Richard the Second. Since the purchase by Sir Edward the family have constantly resided here, and members of it have represented Essex and its boroughs in parliament.

The mansion contains some fine apartments, and the walls of nearly all are enriched with paintings of the first masters. The drawing-room on the right is peculiarly rich in these treasures—a Magdalen by Guido, nearly the size of life,—The Offering of the Wise Men, by Reubens,—and works of Hofland, Cuyp, Vandyke, De Heem, and others, being amongst the number. The dining and other rooms are profusely decorated in the same delightful manner. Undoubted originals of Raphael, Rubens, Rembrandt, Carlo Dolci, Snyders, Van Os, Narveu, Murillo, Vermeuler, Berghem, Alexander Veronese, Gainsborough, Greuze, and Sir Wm. Beechey, are amongst the number, rendering the Bullock collection of paintings one of the finest in the county.

In the little church of Faulkbourn, which appears to be a Norman structure, are monuments to the Fortescue family of 1576 and 1598, with the tombs of Sir Edward Bullock and others who have succeeded him as lords of the manor and squires of this parish. The charities consist of the dividends of £200 Three per Cent. Reduced Annuities, left by Capt. Hutchinson, for distribution in bread, and a rent-charge of 20s. out of a house at Kelvedon, left by the Rev. John Harrison.

**THE BRAXTEDS**—THE SEAT OF CHARLES DU CANE, Esq., M.P.—On leaving Witham, by the high road to Colchester, the Braxteds, swelling up into gentle hills, picturesquely clothed with woodlands, are seen to the right. Little Braxted is about a mile from the town. Its small Norman church, which has been recently thoroughly restored, with its semi-circular apse forming the chancel, and its wooden porch in the style of the Tudor age, is an object of interest to the antiquarian.\* Great Braxted lies two miles beyond. It is a scattered village ; and yonder elegant mansion, of which we catch glimpses from the high road, on an eminence in the midst of a goodly park, is the seat of Charles Du Cane, Esq., one of the members for North Essex. He is now lord of the parish, which formed part of the possessions of Eudo Dapifer, at the

\* There are two cottages in the parish for the poor, given by an unknown donor.

time of Domesday survey ; and after passing through various noble hands, came by purchase to the Du Cane family in 1745. This family, the name of which appears originally to have been Du Quesne, was amongst those which suffered in the cruel persecution for conscience sake and stern adhesion to Protestant principles, under the Duke of Alva in Flanders, in consequence of which they quitted that country, and, with numbers of their co-religionists, sought shelter under the shield which Queen Elizabeth extended over them in England. They settled first in Canterbury, and then in London, engaging in mercantile pursuits, and promoting the silk manufactures so largely introduced by their countrymen. A branch of the house appears to have been early planted in Essex, as we find from intermarriages with the leading families ; and Peter Du Cane, Esq., the purchaser of this estate, who was high sheriff in 1745, and is described as the son of a rich merchant, removed to Braxted Park in 1751. He greatly improved the mansion, which was built by the D'Arcys in the seventeenth century, though it seems to have been a residence of the owners long before that period, as we find mention of a park here so early as 1473. Turning to the right near Rivenhall-gate, a mile brings us within the precincts of the walled park, and passing the sheltering plantation, and the two lodges, a scene of sylvan beauty opens on the view. To the left extends a noble lake of at least 20 acres, lying smooth and glassy in the summer sun-light, or rolling its tiny waves against the green margin when stirred by winter's storm ; and narrowing here and there to the dimensions of a river, it takes its winding course through the domain. On the rising ground along the verge of the water, a fine avenue of trees forms the approach to the mansion ; and as we traverse this, the modest little village church, with its wooden belfry, appears close to us on the right, nestling within the precincts of the park, as if it were an appendage of the manor-house, as it really was in olden days. Crossing a bridge, we ascend the hill top on which stands the mansion, an extensive building of white brick, fronting to the south-west. On one side extend the grounds and gardens of twenty acres, tastefully laid out, and stocked with a fine collection of plants and shrubs. In other directions there lies unrolled before us a wide living panorama of this part of the county ; and as we look abroad upon it, we cannot but feel that in this peaceful and apparently unprotected modern home of an English gentleman, linked with the neighbouring lands, and farm-houses, and hamlets by a thousand friendly and social ties, there is more real security for the country—certainly more comfort—than in the fortified castle and embattled tower



which in old times would have crowned a height like this. On either side of us stretches a park of about 500 acres, the green turf falling rather precipitately to the lake below, within whose wooded verge is found a quiet hermitage, in which contemplation may dream away the summer hour. Beyond lies a rural map of farms and fields, fox-covers, villages, and holy spires "glittering through every woodland shade," till the country fades away in the dim distance. Within, the mansion is as interesting as the beauty of the scene without. The spacious hall, which has an elegantly arched arcade at either end, is richly stored with antique pillars, marble vases, classic statues, and olden sarcophagi, principally, we believe, collected by Peter Du Cane, Esq., in Italy—all exceedingly beautiful specimens of ancient art. The walls of the dining and other rooms are finely adorned with family portraits and the paintings of the old masters. In the centre of the hall stands a magnificent sculptured statuary marble vase, brought from Adrian's villa; and as we turn from it, the eye rests in succession on a series of beautiful columns, amongst them a small antique, 21 inches high, surmounted by a bronze figure of Mercury,—a pair of fine Cippoline marble pillars, five feet high,—another of black and white Neapolitan marble,—and a pair of Egyptian granite pedestals. Here the attention is arrested by a statue of Europa carried off by the bull, an antique marble sarcophagus, a fragment of a leg of the statue of Jupiter,—there by a beautiful figure of the crouching Venus; an antique bust of a child; another of Nero; an Etruscan-shaped marble vase; a pair of fine Parian marble tassas, with handles; a cast of Paris; and a pair of life-size sitting statues beneath the archway at the lower end. Here, too, or in other parts of the mansion, we find Cleopatra, Cupid, and Psyche; an Egyptian figure of the sacred buffalo in black basalt; a sculptured head of Bacchus, in basso antico; a small sculptured Neapolitan marble sarcophagus; with bust, vase, and tassa, of the beauty of which we can convey little idea through the medium of the petty ink-drop. First amongst the paintings may be placed the noble picture by Paulo Panini of St. Peter's, at Rome; and after this we cast an admiring eye in succession as we pass through the apartments on a fine picture on panel by Spagnoletto; a view of the beach at Scheveling by Van Goyen; the ruins of a temple, and its companion picture, by Salvator Rosa; St. James blessing little children, by Andrea del Sarto; a view of the Dogano in Venice, and a companion view, by Canaletto; Virgin and child, in early Italian; View of the Square of St. Marco at Venice, by Guardi; a landscape with pastoral figures, by Poussin; a river in Italy, by

Calcott; a beautiful painting of fruit and insects, and its companion, by F. A. Correyn; a portrait of Rubens; a painting of fruit and still life, by Van Zoon; view in Venice, on panel, by Francis; a portrait, by Vander Helst; landscape and figures, by Pelher; a view, by Van Goyen; Dead game, and fruit, by Snyders; Jupiter, Venus, and Nymphs, by Carlo Lotti; Interior of a larder, by Weenynx; and a small rocky landscape, by Poussin. Turning from drawing-room and hall to what may be called the rear of the building, we enter an arcade opening upon a tasteful lawn to the north-east; and stored with objects of curiosity, skeletons of rare beasts and birds, or denizens of the deep—

“ Works of an all-wise God's creative hand,  
Spoils from the sea, and trophies from the land”—

it forms a pretty little museum and pleasant promenade.

The church, a neat little building, enriched with stained glass windows and fine carvings, stands, as before stated, on a hill-top within the park, and contains the vault of the Du Cane family, and inscriptions to various of its members interred there.

There is a good school-house in the parish, built by Captain Du Cane in 1844; and the charities consist of thirteen acres of land, given in exchange for an allotment, the proceeds of which are distributed in coals; a rent-charge of £3 on Pundicts left by John Frese in 1663; 20s. to be applied for a sermon, £1. 6s. 8d. for a coat or gown for an aged poor person, and 13s. 4d. for distribution in bread; there is also a rent-charge of £1. 6s. 8d. out of Braxted park, by an unknown donor, for poor widows.

**RIVENHALL—THE RESIDENCE OF SIR JOHN PAGE WOOD.**—On the road to Colchester, Rivenhall lies in our path, two miles from Witham, with a village to the left, and a hamlet on the high road. In the first written records of the parish we find it belonged to Editha, the queen of Edward the Confessor, but the unwritten—the remains of a Roman villa, a funeral vase, and imperial coins, discovered in the parish—trace it back as a habitable spot to the earliest ages of our history. With the exception of Dorewood's Hall—which takes its name from John Derewood, who resided here in the time of Richard II.—now the seat of H. Dixon, Esq., the manor, the principal mansion, and the greater part of the lands, are owned by T. B. Western, Esq., whose family formerly inhabited Rivenhall Place, and have their burial-place in the church, which the late lord thoroughly restored and adorned. Rivenhall Place is still the chief mansion of the parish. It was formerly the home

of the Scales, Gate, and Wiseman families; and it is now occupied by the Rev. Sir J. Page Wood, Bart. The house, which was one of the fine old mansions of former ages, stands in a finely-wooded park of a hundred acres, adorned with two beautiful avenues of Wych elms, probably unequalled in the kingdom; while here and there old half-decayed trees raise their leafless arms, and twist their grotesque trunks, like the bleached bones of the past lying in the lap of the green present.

“ Before the mansion lies a lucid lake,  
Broad and transparent, deep and freshly fed,”

whose waters, abounding in pike, extend over nine acres, and form a principal feature in the scene. Crossing this by a tasteful bridge, and passing a lawn which slopes down to its edge, we stand in front of Rivenhall Place, and feel we are treading a locality in which the rude and cumbrous grandeur of our fathers has been supplanted by modern elegance. The park, which we see beautifully undulated in front of us, as it at present appears was laid out by the master-hand of the celebrated Gilpin, but was formerly much more extensive, stretching up to yon surrounding woods. Tradition not only asserts that it once included a race-course, but points much farther back into dim antiquity, and informs us that the venerable oak whose remnant stands in the fields beyond was planted some 700 years ago by the royal hand of King Stephen. On the spot, too, on which we are now treading was a quaint old garden, ornamented after the fashion of other days, with its parterres of flowers, raised walks, statues, and vases; the form of this enclosure being still traceable by the foundations of its terrace walls. The house itself was an extensive pile, forming a large quadrangle, and contained a picture gallery 100 feet in length. So extensive was the establishment even up to nearly the beginning of the present century, that rumour asserts—and an old veteran *employé* who still lingers about the estate confirms it—that thirty retainers of the household sat down daily to dinner in the servants' hall. Much of the building has since been demolished; and as Sir John Wood, who holds the property on a long lease, has expended considerable sums in repairs, improvements, and embellishments, it forms now an elegant modern country seat. The very large hall still remains. There is a noble dining room, fully forty feet in length; a lofty drawing room of about equal proportions; a good library, and morning room; and numerous sleeping rooms, which still bear about them the venerable old-fashioned air of other days. With the picturesqueness of the present and the interest of the past, literary and artistic

reminiscences hover about the spot. Here Addison was often a guest, and within the mansion that prince of English prose penned several of his papers for the *Spectator*. Hogarth, too, was a frequent visitor, and painted at Rivenhall Place various portraits of members of the Western family. Nor has artistic genius in our day deserted the dwelling. The reception rooms are literally crowded with beautiful pictures from the hand of Lady Wood—works which it has been observed “rank that lady’s name high in the roll of living artists, and prove the truth of the poet’s line, that ‘genius of no sex can be.’”

Sir John Page Wood is descended from the Woods of Exeter and Tiverton, and is brother of Sir William Page Wood, one of the Vice-Chancellors. His father (Sir Matthew Wood), whose name will live in history as the unflinching and steady friend of the persecuted Queen Caroline, was an alderman of London and twice Lord Mayor. In 1837 he was created a baronet, and he represented the city in nine successive parliaments down to 1843, when he died, and was succeeded by the present occupier of Rivenhall Place, who is vicar of Cressing and rector of St. Peter’s, Cornhill.

Rivenhall produced one of our olden Essex worthies—Thomas Tusser, the author of the “Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry,” which were long received as canons of agriculture, and are not without interest even in this age, when the discoveries of modern science are being made subservient to the farm. He was born here in 1523; and being educated as a singer, was at Wallingford and St. Paul’s; afterwards going to Eton and Trinity Hall, Cambridge; and he resided for some time at Court with Lord Paget. He had a taste for farming, which he carried on in several counties, once managing the glebe farm at Fairstead; but his precepts appear to have been much better than his practice, for according to his own metrical biography, he did little good anywhere. He is described by Fuller in his “Worthies” as moving from place to place, “successively a musician, schoolmaster, serving-man, husbandman, grazier, and poet; more skilful in all than thriving in any vocation; he spread his bread with all sorts of butter, but none would stick thereon.” Tusser died in 1588, and was buried in St Mildred’s Church, in the Poultry.

There are handsome parish schools in Rivenhall,—for which T. B. Western, Esq., gave the site,—raised by the exertions of the rector, the Rev. B. D. Hawkins. The poor have £4 a year out of Broadoaks, Wimbish, given in 1654 by Sir Ralph Wiseman; the rent of two cottages; and the interest of £50, left by William Bollan in 1780.

**FELIX HALL, THE SEAT OF T. B. WESTERN, Esq.**—Kelvedon is a large and straggling village, four miles from Witham, lying on the north-eastern range of the Hundred, with a fine and interesting church, whose beautiful architecture of the early English and Tudor styles was some years ago cleared from the barbarisms of a former age which before disfigured it. The chief object of interest in the parish is, however, the noble mansion of Felix Hall, the seat of T. B. Western, Esq., the owner of most of the soil. Felix or Filiol's Hall, as it was called from an early owner, whose name appears in the roll of Battle Abbey as one of the invaders who came over with the Conqueror, was long the residence of the Abdy family, which came into possession of it about 1630. It afterwards passed by marriage to John Williams, Esq., who built the Hall soon after 1744, but sold it in 1761 to Daniel Matthews, Esq., by whom large additions were made to the mansion. It was not, however, till it came into the possession of the late Lord Western in 1795, that it assumed its present character of classic elegance. The Hall stands about a mile from Kelvedon, on the north side of the village; and, as we emerge from the road in the valley below, through the evergreen plantations, and pursue the winding carriage drive, the mansion appears before us on a commanding eminence, which affords good views of the neighbouring coverts and corn fields, and the country far away. The house fronts to the south-east. It consists of a centre and two wings; the whole is one hundred and sixty feet in length, and the grand door is entered by a raised portico, modelled from that of the Temple of Fortuna Virilis at Rome, as illustrated by Desgodetz, consisting of six columns of the Grecian Ionic order, with two corresponding pilasters. The remainder of the building is in perfect harmony, and presents a correct specimen of Grecian architecture. The apartments are of noble proportions; and the hall, the dining-room—with a fine ceiling of the Corinthian order, and a magnificent Italian chimney-piece of statuary marble—the drawing and ante-rooms are stored with paintings, amongst them a good likeness of the late lord and his brother, by Copley, and portraits of the Shirleys, with whom the Westerns were connected by marriage. But the chief attraction is the rich collection of classic spoils, statues, busts, and vases, principally gathered by the late lord in Italy. The floor of the hall is composed of black and white marble, tessellated; the centre adorned with a Mosaic representation of the head of Medusa, which was dug out of the ruins of a villa on the Via Appia, at Rome. This laborious production of ancient art was found, as here, in the centre of the floor of the

apartment, and was purchased by his lordship in 1825. Relics and statues surround us on all sides, but we can only glance at the most interesting as we pass along. Here are two, the first discovered in a vault at Cestia in 1825, and which, in fine preservation, is untouched by the hand of the restorer. It represents at one end the descent of Diana on Mount Latmos, to visit the shepherd Endymion, with attendant nymphs and Cupids; at the other end she is stepping back to her car, while Apollo is seen in his chariot as the rising sun. From the inscription it appears to have been erected by Aminia Hilara, to the memory of her husband Claudius Arria. The figures are formed with great spirit, and stand out in singularly high relief. The other is a fine head of the goddess Roma, and highly ornamented. It is evidently very ancient, and is rather defaced, either by accident or by the rude hand of ignorance, which, like time, pays no more respect to the chiselled pillar of the olden temple than to the rough post that props the wayside cottage or the cart-shed. Next the attention is attracted by two beautiful antique white marble cinerary urns on two pedestals; and in the centre, on an antique bracket, rest the fragments of an ancient statue of Bacchus—the head and part of the arms and trunk remaining to tell how the air of life once appeared to breathe through the sculptured form. Near by are two fine marble columns of the Grecian Ionic order, the shaft of each cut out of one single block of fine statuary Carrara marble, and an original antique bust of Augustus at the age of twelve years, found at Albano, in the Campagna di Roma. Perhaps one of the finest objects amongst the busts is Annia Faustina, wife of Marcus Aurelius. In addition to the admitted fact of the head being a correct likeness of that extraordinary female, the drapery is of agate, of an amber tint and transparent, which, though not in the purest taste, when contrasted with the other busts has a good effect. There is also a head in fresco, painted upon a tile. It is a Roman work of art in the style of those discovered at Pompeii. The tile has had a surface of plaster, upon which the head has been drawn with a hard point; it has then been painted. The picture is a fine female Roman head of great excellence, as well as of antiquity so high as to exhibit a specimen of Roman art of a period at least coeval with the works which remain to us at Herculaneum, and is one of the finest specimens of its class in this country. The head was found in Rome by Trentanove, the distinguished sculptor. No classic antiquarian can visit Felix Hall without gazing admiringly and lovingly upon two antique tazzas or vases, the first four feet three inches and a half high, and three feet seven

inches in diameter. Its peculiar beauty is the gracefulness of its form. It stands on a single stem, and has the handles formed of swans' necks and heads entwined. There is not in England any vase of this character—nothing in fact, like it, even in the British Museum. It was used, it is conjectured, in the religious ceremonies of the ancients. The late lord obtained possession of it at Rome in 1825.\* The other is equal in height and beauty of execution, but differs in shape from that before noticed, being a tripod, on which are various rich specimens of antique sculpture. Round the exterior of the cup in bas relief appear flowers, griffins, and other ornaments, and the stems bear leopard heads executed with great spirit. This also was purchased at Rome in 1825, and was formerly in the possession of Franzini, director of the museum of the Vatican under Popes Pius VI. and VII. There are also two Etruscan vases, composed of burnt earth, from the style of the workmanship supposed to be of the time of Alexander, and consequently (even dating from the period of his death) 2,161 years old. The embellishments are peculiarly elegant and rich. They were purchased we believe at Naples. There lie scattered around, various other relics of perished empires, but in deciding the origin of some of them we are left

“To wide conjecture's dubious light  
That hovers 'twixt the day and night,”

for their history is hidden in a mist, far more impenetrable than the ruins from which they have been redeemed: perchance

“These Cecrops placed—this Pericles adorned—  
“That Hadrian rear'd, when drooping science mourned;”

but nothing remains but their intrinsic merit to tell of the hands which gave them birth.

The family of Western we find was settled in London in the time of Henry VII.; Thomas Western, the youngest son of William Western, purchased the manor of Rivenhall of the Wiseman family in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and thenceforth his family became seated at Rivenhall Place. Here it took root, and threw out various branches, connecting itself by marriage with the Bateman and Shirley families. They are also descended through Catherine le Gros, of Crosthwaite, Norfolk, a co-heiress, whose arms they quarter, from Lady Anne Plantagenet, wife of Bouchier, Earl of Ewe, in Normandy, grand-daughter of Edward III. Samuel Western was one of the barons of the cinque ports in the time of William III.; and in the possession of the family is a silver cup made

\* The original has been since presented to the British Museum, but a good copy, in white marble, has been placed in the dining-room.



from a standard borne at the coronation, as it appears by the following inscription on the bottom :—

"Samuel Western, Esq., one of the Barons of the Cinque Ports at the revolution, 1688, made this cup out of one of the standards he bore at the coronation of William III."

Charles Callis Western, Esq., having purchased Felix Hall towards the end of the last century, made it his principal residence. He was created a baron in 1833, but the title was limited to heirs male of his body, and he died unmarried in 1844. The title became extinct. He was succeeded in his estates by Thomas Burch Western, Esq., the present owner, son of Rear-Admiral Western, of Tattingstone Place, Suffolk, and father of the present member for Maldon, Thomas Sutton Western, Esq. On the north side of the chancel in Rivenhall church, near a costly and elegant tomb on William Western, Esq., who died in 1729, and other memorials of the family, is a noble gothic monument in Caen stone, with the following inscription, in illuminated letters, on a marble slab :—

"In the vault beneath are deposited the remains of the Right Hon. Charles Callis Western, Baron Western of Rivenhall, eldest and only surviving son of Charles Western, of Rivenhall place, Esqre., who departed this life on the fourth day of November, MDCCCLIV., in the lxxviii. year of his age. Lord Western served his country in the Commons House of Parliament for upwards of xlii. years, during xxii. years of which he was member for the borough of Maldon, and during xx. represented this county; he was raised to the peerage by His Majesty William IV., in the year MDCCCXXXIII. True to his sovereign, zealous for the rights and interests of the people, foremost in every agricultural improvement, and a benevolent friend of the poor, his name will long be cherished with esteem and gratitude.

"This monument is erected to his memory by his kinsman and successor, Thomas Burch Western, of Tattingstone Place, Suffolk, Esqre."

There are nine almshouses in Kelvedon—four in London-road, and five in Church-street, occupied by the poor, rent-free; they were given by John Marler in 1419; and the rent of an acre of land left by the same donor is carried to the poor-rate, as the parish keeps the premises in repair, rent-charges of 5s. 4d., left for the purpose, being lost. A house and school were left by Thomas Aylett in 1635, in trust with the owners of Dorewood's Hall, for a school-master to be appointed by them, and to whom he also gave £10 a year out of the rectory of Great Totham: the latter has not been paid for many years, but the premises are used as a British school, and the master receives £5 from Joscelyn's charity at Terling for teaching five boys free. The poor have, for distribution in bread, the rent of eight acres of land at East Thorpe, left by Robert Smith in 1637, with the interest of £100 to be given in coals, left by Joseph Docwra, in 1837.

## Thurstable Hundred.

THIS is a small district, partly agricultural and partly maritime, lying on the verge of the river and Blackwater Bay, along which it extends from Heybridge to Tollesbury and Tiptree Heath, and it is bounded on other sides by Lexden and Winstree and Witham hundreds. It is about eleven miles long from west to east, from three to six broad, and it includes the following ten parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Heybridge .....	The high bridge .....	2186	1330	5103	211 10 0	200 0 0
Goldhanger.....	<i>Asagre</i> , the place; the prefix <i>gold</i> cannot be accounted for	2724	535	3030	612 0 0	
Langford.....	Long-ford .....	1076	272	1913	294 0 0	
Tollesbury .....	Toll and town—the place where ships paid toll .....	10638	1193	6434	762 0 0	539 0 0
Tolleshunt D'Arcy .....	Toll or custom, and <i>hunt</i> : the parishes are distinguished by the names of ancient owners.....	3371	792	4561	250 0 0	250 5 0
Tolleshunt Major .....		2244	479	3244		187 0 0
Tolleshunt Knights.....		2079	371	2348	540 0 0	
Great Totham.....		5263	840	4446	450 0 0	178 0 0
Little Totham.....	<i>Tote</i> , a man's name, and <i>ham</i> , a habitation .....	1283	388	1918	368 0 0	
Wickham Bishops.....	<i>Wic</i> , a farm or dairy; <i>ham</i> , a house; and the Bishop of London, the owner .....	1534	577	3000	476 0 0	

The hundred includes a pleasant tract of country. Along the estuary of the Blackwater lies a large extent of rich marsh land, running from the vicinity of Maldon up to Salcot creek; and beyond this rises a range of undulating high-lands, upon which are seen the villages and church-towers of the parishes enumerated. The district was no doubt the scene of some very early settlements, and it was often over-run and ravaged by the Danes; but there is little of striking interest to be traced in its ancient history. Its local records are little more than a dry detail of births and burials, of families who have long since departed and left few foot-prints on the lands they owned. There is scarcely a ruin to arrest our steps; few mansions or parks of the modern world challenge the eye of the traveller. Salt-works were at an early period carried on extensively in the hundred. They are often mentioned amongst the possessions and grants in Domesday Book. The Conqueror had three large factories of the kind here; but this branch of industry has dwindled away beneath the competition of other parts of the kingdom, and the inhabitants are now employed either in maritime pursuits—oyster-dredging and the coal carrying trade—or in agriculture.

HEYBRIDGE, which is situated on the north side of the river, opposite Maldon, of which it almost forms a suburb—connected as it is with it by an ancient artificial causeway, which was considered of such importance that Edward II. ordered a careful survey of it in 1324—may, perhaps, from its trade and population, be regarded as the capital of the hundred. It is a place of great antiquity; and was at one time a town of some importance, its houses extending along Potten-Marsh,

and in other directions far beyond the present village precincts. Tradition even describes it as one of the battle-fields of Boadicea in her wars against the invaders; and imperial coins which have been found in the parish give credit to the belief that here either Roman battalions have been marshaled, or Roman dwellings have been raised. The High-bridge—or Wall-bridge, as it was anciently called—is very old, and it is asserted that the mainstream which now flows beneath the Full-bridge once took a course through its five arches. So early as the reign of King Athelstane the parish was given, under the name of Tidwalditune—which name it bore till the time of Edward I.—to the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, and to the present day the Dean and Chapter are the lords and owners of much of the soil; but the property, with the tithes, has for a long time been held on lease by the family of Herring. Considerable salt-works were formerly carried on here, but these at last dwindled down to one small factory; and in their place two extensive firms of iron-founders and agricultural implement makers have risen up to furnish employment for a large portion of the population. The church, a Norman structure, stands close to the creek, with its yard washed by the tide; and it contains some ancient monuments of the Freshwaters, who were formerly the lessees of the parish under the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's.\*

Two miles away to the right, in the fertile lowlands towards Witham, lies the rural parish of LANGFORD, the native place of Thomas Langford, (or Thomas of Langford), who, as already noticed, composed a Universal Chronicle. The principal feature is the Grove, a delightful mansion in modern style, with good gardens, sloping lawns with sheets of water, and a finely wooded park. It was formerly the seat of the Wescombe family. Nicholas Wescombe, Esq., purchased the manor in 1680, after which the mansion was built, and from that time the family resided here. J. E. Wescombe, Esq., who owned much of the soil, died intestate, and the property passed to the three Misses Wescombe, his nieces, one of whom married the Hon. G. A. Byron, a son of Lord Byron; the property passed to him, but is now occupied by Major Wardlaw.†

On the picturesque highlands above, with its houses straggling towards Tiptree Heath, is WICKHAM BISHOPS, upon whose hill-top, at the early part of the present century, when the county was watching the coming of the invader, a beacon was built to give notice of his approach. The manor has been the property of the Bishops of London from the time of the Saxon, and the lordly prelates often made the old hall their place of residence. Bishop Courtney, in 1375, obtained a license from Edward III. to empark 300 acres of land around it. It was a venerable mansion, moated round, and containing monuments of many noble families. In the windows of the hall and parlour were thirteen escutcheons, curiously painted, with six others in the chamber above.

\* The charities of Heybridge consist of a sum left by Thomas and Edward Freshwater, in 1635 and 1678, out of houses in New-street, Chelmsford, for a coat and gown, and 1s. yearly, to six poor men and women; a rent-charge of £2. 12s. by a donor unknown, out of London's Farm, in Goldhanger and the Tothams, for distribution in bread; and a cottage and four crofts of land, containing eleven acres, the proceeds are applied to the repair of the church, the payment of the clerk, &c.

† Old records state that in 1680 Sarah Hall gave Foster's Gardens, consisting of three dwellings in the street, to the poor for ever, and 40s. for their repair; but the Charity Commissioners make no allusion to it.

In many of the panels were scrolls, with the words in antique letters—"Kempe, Hen. 4, Honor Deo.;" and the roof was decorated with various carvings of coats of arms, amongst them those of D'Arcy, Tyrell, the City and the See of London, Coggeshall, Bouchier, Kempe, and England and France—memorials of the splendour of the edifices, and the power of those who dwelt here. Not a wreck of it, however, is now left. The ancient pile was long since demolished, nought being left remaining but the moat; the park has been divided into fields, and a plain farmhouse occupies the site. Hill House, a good mansion, is the residence of Herbert Leigh, Esq. The Rev. Phillip Morant, the Essex historian, was incumbent of this parish from 1742 to 1745; the little ancient church in which he ministered stands near the river, a mile off, but an elegant new structure, built at the sole charge of Miss Leigh, raises its holy spire upon the hill-top near the village, and far around is seen as a sacred and softening object in the landscape.

Pursuing the road from Maldon to Tiptree and Colchester, we reach the **TOTHAMS**. Great Totham, of which the Honywood family are now the lords, is reported to have been a place of some importance in the early ages of our history; but all the evidence left of it is the genealogy of the withered families who dwelt here, and traces of the moats which surrounded the manor-houses in the days when the Englishman's house was literally, not from law but necessity, his castle. They are, the Hall, Friars, and Lofts, at Broad-street Green,—the latter the seat of the Bullock family, before it removed to Faulkourn Hall. All these are now farmhouses. On the shore, too, are the borough-hills—a number of tumuli or heaps of earth, which it is believed mark the graves of those who fell in the many struggles which took place at this spot between the Danish ravagers and the Saxon defenders. As these hills are just at that point of the stream at which the colliers unloaded in the last century, it is concluded that the vessels of the savage sea-kings drew about the same water as those humble craft—thus often compelling them at all hazards to land here. From the higher parts of the parish a splendid panorama of maritime and rural life is opened to the view. Standing on Beacon Hill, reported to be some of the highest ground in the county, rising 700 feet above the level of the sea, a vast expanse of beautiful scenery lies around us on all sides. Beneath us, in one direction, spreads a wide sweep of undulating country, with the inland towns of Chelmsford and Braintree, and the roofs or spires of thirty-six parish churches; in another are seen the estuaries of the Blackwater and the Colne, with the broad surface of the German Ocean beyond; and from the observatory of a house erected on this eminence, glimpses may be caught of the hills of Kent, and the eye may trace the course of the steamers as they scud along the breast of the Thames. A huge elm upon the highest ground is a landmark for the mariner, as he guides his vessel homeward up the winding Blackwater. Ossey Island, of 242 acres, lying five miles off in the estuary of the Blackwater, is a part of this parish, probably from its having belonged, in the early ages, to the same lords.\* Little Totham lies in general low, towards the marshes; the Nottidge family

\* The only charitable bequest in the parish consists of a house, and sixteen acres of land in Little Braxted, left by John Goddeshalf, for the repair of the church; other church lands have been lost.

own the chief manor. Its little church has been described as having at the western entrance, within the porch, "One of the most highly enriched Norman door-ways in the county;" and in the church are some tombs to members of the Sommers' family, one of which bears the inscription—"Here lieth the body of John Sommers, Esq., late lord of this manor, and patron of this church, Ob. 18 Oct. 1606."

The neat little village below is **GOLDHANGER**, lying upon the bay of the Blackwater, at the head of a short creek, four miles from Maldon. A large salt-work was carried on here in the last century, rock salt from Cheshire being used with sea water in the manufacture; but this trade has taken flight elsewhere. Two estates here—**Follifaunts** and **Fawlty**—were given to **Beeleigh Abbey** by **Robert Mantel**, its founder; but these passed to other hands at the Reformation; and the chief manor goes with that of **Little Totham**.

Returning from the water-side valley to the high-lands, we enter the **TOLLESHUNTS**—three parishes lying contiguous. The first is **Tolleshunt-Major**, or **Beckingham**, so called from the **Beckingham** family, which came into possession of it in 1543, as part of the spoil of **Coggeshall Abbey**, it having been the property of the holy brotherhood from the reign of **Stephen** to the Reformation. **Sir Thomas Beckingham** dwelt in state in the old manor-house, which stood at the north-west corner of the churchyard, on the site of the present farm-house. It was then a noble mansion, surrounded by an extensive park; but the **Beckinghams** have passed away from the land, and all that is left of their dwelling-place is this ancient brick gateway by which they entered, flanked by four embattled but crumbling turrets; and in the farmhouse some fine old oak carvings, which probably once adorned the hall of state, decorate the kitchen. In 1710, **Dr. Daniel Williams**, who had bought the estate, settled it on the **Society for New England**, £60 to be applied to two persons to preach as itinerants to the pagans and blacks in the **West Indies**, and the remainder for the **College of Cambridge** in **New England**, to be applied to the conversion of poor Indians. The manor and the rectory still belong to the **New England Society**. There were other old mansions in this parish; one of them **Highams**, the seat of the **Higham** family, which had carved, in large capitals over the door, "*Concordia Nutrit Amorem*"—"Concord cultivates affection." In the church, part of which is Norman, was formerly an inscription to **Robert Higham** and **Lettice** his wife, of the date of 1427. In the east window of the chancel, too, were the words in Latin—"Pray for the good estate of **Robert Prior of Dunmow**," that house being once patrons of the rectory. These relics of another age are gone, and with them the chapel and the elaborate tombs of the **Beckinghams**, which stood on the north side of the church.\* **Tolleshunt Knights** lies on a Roman road, as proved by the pavements and other relics of that people exhumed here, which appears to have led in a direction from **Colchester** to **Maldon**. **Barnwalden**, or **Barn Hall** manor, which was in **Ralph Baynard** at the time of the survey, is now the property of the **Abdy** family. The hall, says a legend of the neighbourhood, was originally about to be built on another site,

\* The charities of the parish consist of £2, out of **Joyce's** farm, and £1 out of **Higham's** farm, left by **Sir C. Clitherow**, for distribution amongst twelve poor parishioners; and £2, left by **Sir S. Beckingham**, out of **Freme**, in **Tolleshunt D'Arcy**, but not paid in modern times.

of about two acres, now surrounded with water and covered with brushwood. The moat was made, and the materials collected, but his satanic majesty interposed. He did not approve of the situation—whether because it interfered with some rights of his own, or because he expected to be a frequent visitor at the mansion, tradition saith not—and taking up one of the beams he threw it a full mile, to the spot where the house now stands, exclaiming—

“ Where this beam fall,  
Shall stand Bow Hall,”

and the owner, not being disposed to dispute this decision, accordingly erected it there. It must be admitted that his dark majesty evinced better taste than the proprietor, as the other is rather a dreary spot, and the house now commands beautiful prospects over Mersea Island, and even to the sea. Brook Hall, from an early age in the Abbey of St. Osyth, the monks of which possessed five manors here, and afterwards in the forsaken Queen of Henry VIII., is now the property of H. Bacon, Esq. Queen Elizabeth gave this manor to Sir John Spencer, Lord Mayor of London in 1594; and it is recorded that at his death “his corpse was attended by above one thousand men in black gowns and cloaks, among whom were 320 poor men, who had every one a basket, in which there were four pounds of beef, two loaves, a little bottle of wine, and a pound of candles, a candlestick, two saucers, two spoons, a black pudding, a pair of gloves, a dozen of points for shoe-strings, two red and four white herrings, six sprats, and two eggs.” He left Lord Compton, who married his daughter, property worth £50,000; and his grandson, who succeeded to this estate, and became the Earl of Northampton, was killed at Hopeton-Heath, while in arms for Charles I. The church is a small ancient building; in the chancel is a defaced effigy, supposed to be that of a Knight Templar, and near it formerly stood an iron spear or javelin of great weight—the weapon, probably, which the warrior who slumbers beneath wielded in the holy land.\* Tolleshunt D'Arcy, a neat and considerable village, is chiefly remarkable for the remnants which are left of the residences of its ancient lords—the D'Arcys (descendants of de Arici, the Norman) who owned most of the parish, and dwelt here from the reign of Stephen down to the closing years of the sixteenth century. Their chief residence was the manor-house of Tolleshunt D'Arcy, or the Hall, then a building of considerable extent and pretensions, moated round for protection, and, no doubt, then approached by a drawbridge. In later times, however, when the more solid establishment of law and order had rendered these precautions against lawless bands and feudal warriors unnecessary, a stone bridge of four arches was built across the moat, and this still remains, bearing the arms of the D'Arcys, and the date 1575. Part of the house was pulled down in the last century, but much of it still remains, and the fine old carvings on the wainscoting and other parts of the rooms give an idea of its former magnificence. Lanbokes, too, a seat of a branch of the same family, and Fremes, once the home of the Beckinghams, contain similar relics and illustrations of the style of the domestic decorations of the dwellings of the gentry in ancient days. J. G. Rebow, Esq., is now the chief lord of the parish, Sir

\* The charities consist of twelve acres, one rood, thirty-nine poles, of land in Tolleshunt, left by Anthony Abdy, in 1635, two-thirds for eight poor persons, which are distributed in bread, and one-third to Virley.



Isaac Bebow, Bart., having purchased the estate, with the rectory, of Mr. Hedgthorn, a merchant of Colchester, in the seventeenth century. The White House Farm was bought, in 1635, by the trustees of Henry Smith, and was settled, in 1641, for charitable purposes in fourteen parishes, four of which are in Essex—Braintree, Henham, Terling, and Tolleshunt D'Arcy. According to the statutes, the proceeds of the charity are to be distributed "in clothing, bread, fish, or flesh, amongst the poor who have been inhabitants for five years, who take no alms of the parish, are not vagrants, or guilty of any scandalous crime." The clothing is to consist of upper garments only, and on the right arm is to be a badge with the letters "H. S." The share of this parish is about £20 a-year, which is distributed in bread, flour, and meat. The church, which has been restored in modern times, formerly belonged to the neighbouring Priory of Tiptree, and was given to Cardinal Wolsey by Henry VIII., probably as part of the provision for some of the colleges he was engaged in founding; but on the fall of that ecclesiastic it reverted to the crown. The north aisle forms the D'Arcy chapel—the burial place of that family; and it formerly contained many ancient monuments and inscriptions, but part only have survived the touch of time and of the irreverent hand. The oldest of these is one to John de Boys, "formerly lord of Tolleshunt Trejoz, who died 15th August, 1419." Beneath a man in armour is the inscription, "Here, under this stone, lieth Anthony Darcy, Esq., and justice of peace to our sovereign lord King Henry VIII., which Anthony deceased 18th October, 1540."

TOLLESBURY, a busy fishing village, stands on the margin of the marshes beyond the Tolleshunts and Goldhanger, at the eastern end of the hundred, fully eight miles from Maldon. It is protected from the tide by sea walls, and beyond that is a large extent of saltings. C. Du Cane, Esq., M.P., is lord of Tollesbury Hall, which formerly belonged to St. Mary's Abbey, at Barking; P. Bennet, Esq. owns Bouchier Hall, a fine old manor, formerly a seat of the Bouchier family, having then a goodly park about it; and Bohuns Hall belongs to Benyon de Beauvoir, Esq. It is stated by the historian that Tollesbury was unquestionably the place where toll or custom was paid by ships coming up to this bay; and it was then a place of some note in the maritime business of the district. A large number of the inhabitants are now engaged in culling and nursing that luscious dainty, the oyster; about fifty boats being engaged in dredging for the spat and young brood, which are then deposited in the layings of the creek till they attain shape and shell, when they are sent to the Kentish and other coasts to be fitted and fattened for market. The operations of this trade are facilitated by a company, which possesses part of the creek, and purchases spat from the dredgers. The church contains some monuments, none of them, however, older than the sixteenth century; and there is a tradition that "under a stone in the belfry, which had an effigy of brass, lies one Martin, a beggar, who on his death-bed discovered two pots of money which he had hid, and appointed two bells to be bought with it, which were accordingly hung up." The rent of five acres of land in Tolleshunt Knights, left to the poor by Robert Tailor, in 1652, is applied to the parish school.

TIPTREE HEATH AND PRIORY.—This parish includes part of Tiptree Heath, a remnant of the great Essex forest, which up to the beginning of the present century was a wild and lawless district, with two



thousand acres of open common, abandoned to a few miserable cattle and the vagrant gipsy rover. In the year 1400, we find that the freeholders and tenants in Inworth, Messing, Layer Marney, Great and Little Braxted, Totham, Tollesbury, Tolleshunt, Wigborough, Maldon, Salcot, Goldhanger, Wickham Bishops, and Langford, had feed for their cattle on this heath, with the right to cut trees for the repair of their buildings and underwood for fuel. A hundred years ago attempts were made to turn the tract to some profitable account, but they failed. Modern perseverance, however, has been more successful. Two-thirds of it have been enclosed; and the rich barley crop or the waving wheat ear has taken the place of the broom or the scraggy furze bush, much to the improvement of the character and comfort of the population; for whose spiritual cultivation the pious liberality of the neighbouring landowners has raised in the midst a beautiful little church with its appendant schools. The heath is apportioned between the different adjacent parishes. In this wild scene, in the part which now belongs to Great Braxted, stood Tiptree Priory, a house for black canons of St. Augustine, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Nicholas. Not a remnant or ruin of the monastery or church is left, and its history is almost a blank. At the suppression its revenues were valued at £22. 6s. 4d.

**TIPTREE HALL FARM.**—Away to the south-east, on the verge of the still remaining waste, and in the parish of Tollesbury, rises a tall steam-chimney—an unexpected sight in this woodland and thoroughly rural district. Guided by this landmark over heath and along a walk skirted by evergreens, a short half mile brings us to the front of Tiptree Hall, the residence of Mr. Alderman Mechi, with its garden and pleasure grounds on one side, and on the other and along the rear the buildings of the farm whose name has become familiar in every hall and homestead, and, we may almost add, every hovel of the land. It is not for us to mingle as partizans or arbitrators in the conflict of opinion through which the owner of Tiptree Hall has good-humouredly but steadily passed—the fierce controversy, the jealous gibe, the almost open insult, the doubts that must at times have gathered, like small black phantoms on his path, as they will before the feet of every one who steps out of the common way. Our purpose is simply to record the mode in which a dearth and dreary spot has been converted into this smiling scene. Mr. Mechi bought Tiptree Hall farm of 130 acres in 1840, for £3,250. He has laid out on it in improvements £6,200, or nearly double the fee simple of the land, besides £700 since expended to carry out the system of irrigation. No sooner had he obtained possession of the property, than he began to work out the theory of improvement which he appears to have formed in his own mind. His new neighbours looked on with a supercilious smile. His ideas were regarded as agricultural heresies. His first drain pipes were ridiculed as pencil cases. Still he kept on, committing, no doubt, some errors—the usual penalties of experience; but soon effecting an unwonted change in the locality. A bog, before treacherous to the foot, was drained and converted into a flower garden and pleasant pleasure-grounds, while the water, before deadly to useful vegetation, was turned into an ornamental lake. The old house, standing near the brook, a dilapidated and unhealthy hovel in which the tenant could not reside, was demolished, and up there rose the present mansion, with elegant drawing and dining rooms, the latter opening into a tasteful conservatory, with all the other conveniences

of a good country seat. The practical improvements on the farm were carried on in the same spirit. These improvements consisted in the removal of all timber trees that it was thought could not be profitably grown in corn fields; the laying of the farm as it were into one by the removal of all the old crooked and unnecessary banks, fences and ditches, and then re-partitioning it with new parallel ditches and fences so as to avoid all short lands; the enclosure of waste and conversion of bog; the cutting of new roads and erection of arches, so as to bring all parts of the farm into direct communication with the homestead; the erection of farm buildings in a continued line of brick, iron, and slate; the complete and permanent drainage of the land by forming between eighty and ninety miles of drains of stones and pipes, four yards apart, and thirty-two inches deep, and draining the chapel land, of forty-five acres, four to five feet deep, at a cost of 33s. to 60s. per acre, according to width; the setting-up of a steam-engine for thrashing and doing much of the work of the homestead; and lastly, the providing of a manure tank, and by means of iron pipes laid over the fields and the aid of steam, irrigating the crops with liquid manure. The farm is, in fact, turned into an agricultural factory for forcing corn and fattening meat. The invariable question has been—Does all this pay? Mr. Mechi asserts that it does, and he produces vouching figures as his witnesses. The original rent of the farm was a little over twenty shillings an acre. The interest on improvements has more than doubled this; but the difference in produce is from £3 to £5, and in some crops from £7 to £9, an acre. The usual quantity of seed per acre, is—wheat, one bushel; barley, six to eight pecks; oats, two bushels. The average yield is—wheat, over five quarters; barley, seven quarters; oats, eleven quarters; mangel, from twenty-five to forty tons. Mr. Mechi asserts that the difference in his crops as compared with those of many others is from £5 to £10 an acre. He seldom makes less than from ten to thirteen score pounds of meat per acre over the whole farm, and he has not lost one sheep per year for fifteen years, though he fattens from three hundred to four hundred annually. In the general working of the farm every item of expenditure, diffused over the whole area, amounts to £7. 17s. 2d. per acre; all realized from the crops beyond this is interest on capital or profit. The additional rent necessary to pay him as landlord for the improvements made, Mr. Mechi estimates at £240; and the gain or saving from the timber removed; the land gained by the removal of banks and fences, on an average two yards wide; the reclamation of bogs and waste, the avoidance of long fallows, the saving in horse and manual labour, the increase in the crops, and the benefits of the new residence, is put down at £248. 2s. According to his last published balance-sheet, Mr. Alderman Mechi realized a profit of £517. 15s. above his improved rent as landlord of £240, besides £120 horse-keep omitted to be credited. His rent and profit, he states, for the last six years, have averaged quite £700 a-year; and this year, even at present prices, he will make over £600 on the farm, now consisting of 170 acres, after payment of all expenses. Having worked the estate up to this point, he has ceased to make Tiptree Hall a show farm; the pleasant annual gatherings at which, after inspection of the crops and premises, there used to assemble at the festive table, practical men, distinguished foreigners, the neighbouring gentry, and city magnates, have been discontinued; and he has sat down to enjoy the fruits of his enterprise in peace.

Minstree Hundred.

This small Hundred, which is only about nine miles long by five at the broadest part, partakes of the mixed agricultural and maritime character of that of Thurstable, to which it adjoins west; and it is bounded on the east and south by the estuary of the Colne and the ocean. It contains the following thirteen small and thinly-peopled parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Laver Marney	From the brook running through them, anciently called <i>Lave</i> , and the names of their respective owners...	1973	279	2114	466 0 0	
Laver Breton		954	294	1440	302 0 0	
Laver-de-la-Hay		2577	788	3245	*536 0 0	
Abberton	Upper-town, or name of the owner .....	1067	279	1532	314 0 0	
Fingringhoe	Three Saxon words .....	3433	603	3400	398 0 0	176 0 0
Langenhoe	The Saxon words <i>Lang</i> and <i>hoe</i> —Long-hill.....	2104	168	2181	439 0 0	
Peldon	Don is from <i>Dun</i> —a hill .....	2186	302	2468	575 0 0	
Gt. Wigborough	From Saxon words, signifying a battle, and a fort or castle.	2585	471	3086	624 0 0	
Lt. Wigborough		1168	89	1143	225 10 0	
Salcot	Salt-work or store .....	255	189	423	† 75 0 0	
Virley	Name of ancient owner.....	632	88	608	126 0 0	231 3 0
West Mersea	A marsh and island .....	4615	370	4758	502 10 0	
East Mersea		2837	291	2659		

\* The benefice is a perpetual curacy.  
† The rectory is also endowed with a farm at Rochford.

The name of the hundred is generally believed to be derived from two Saxon words signifying “Victory” and “a wood”—probably an allusion to an important battle with some of the fierce marauders who in early ages found access to this district from the sea. The Danes, as we have already seen, were driven to Mersea Island, and besieged there after their defeat by King Alfred; the Saxons had many salt-works—then an important branch of manufacture—along this coast; considerable commerce, according to the capabilities of that day, appears to have been carried on here; and there is no doubt that the inhabitants had acquired some of the civilization and luxurious tastes of the neighbouring city of Camulodunum; so that the exposed tract was peculiarly tempting to the sea-rover seeking only for plunder. Thus at a later period, Mersea Island, which had been a sort of suburban residence for some of the great officers and Roman aristocracy of Colchester, became a place of importance for resisting the entrance of the northern robbers into the Colne or the bay. At the present time the remains to be found in that island of the magnificence of the imperial rulers, and the stately towers of Laver Marney—memorials of the splendour which prevailed here nearly two thousand years later—are the chief objects of interest in the hundred.

As we step across the boundary of Thurstable Hundred, SALCOT, included in the adjacent manors, and SALCOT-VIRLEY, chiefly belonging to the Abdy family, and originally, it is conjectured, forming one vill, lie in the low grounds to the right, opposite to each other, at the head of the creek to which they give name. Salcot, which is a hamlet of Great Wigborough, is now a humble village surrounded by marsh lands and saltings, and inhabited by a few seamen. Anciently,

however, it was a market town of some extent and repute, as appears by the record of some legal proceedings in 1317. Often has the busy spade laid bare the foundations of olden structures here, and lingering traditions assert that the place had once its public buildings, its mercantile establishments, and its paved streets. But either civil war with its swift desolation, or decay with its slow consumptive death and departing trade, has done its work, and the receding tide has left the place a wreck upon the marshes, with a score of fragile cottages raised above the buried foundation stones of the olden town. There are no traces above ground in which we can read the history of the past, save perhaps the two ancient churches, which are separated from each other only by the narrow creek. That of Salcot, now used as a chapel to Wigborough, was once a stately building with its endowed chantry; and, to account for two churches in such close juxtaposition, we find repeated here the legend of Willingale—that a sisterly dispute as to precedence led to the erection of the second sacred edifice, that each might have an altar of her own. The more probable explanation of the matter, however, is that Philip de Verli, or some of the other ancient lords here, finding there was great difficulty at times in crossing the creek, built a church on the north side for the accommodation of his own tenants.

Rising above the vale of creek and marsh, and from the ascending declivity and neighbouring high-lands affording fine views along the estuary of the Blackwater and occasionally of the ocean, extend the parishes of GREAT and LITTLE WIGBOROUGH. Most of the former belonged in old Roman catholic times to “the celleress of the nunnery of Barking,” afterwards to the Abbot of St. Osyth, to cheer up the hearts of the religious at the feasts of St. Michael and Easter; but the Abbots Hall, which has passed through the Bullock and other families, is now the property of H. Bacon, Esq. The manor of Copt Hall, in Little Wigborough, is now the property of the Charter-house, having been purchased by the Governors of Sir John Cotton, about 1620.\*

**LAYER MARNEY HALL.**—As we pursue our tour through the district, and veer a little more inland, the eye is soon attracted by the stupendous fragments of the ancient home of the Marneys—the towers of Layer Marney, as they are popularly called, but in reality the gateway of the old hall. These towers stand in the midst of the scene like the giant ghosts of departed greatness. The building was square, enclosing a large court, one hundred and four feet six inches by seventy-six feet four inches; and the grand entrance was by the gateway to the south—the only fragment remaining. These towers rise on each side of the gateway to the height of eighty feet, and consist of eight stories, the space between over the arch being occupied by two large and lofty apartments. From the summit splendid views are commanded of the surrounding country, with the estuary of the Blackwater, and the waters of the sea on the verge of the horizon. The building, in the days of its splendour, was for beauty, costliness, and extent, exceeded by none in the county, save perhaps by New Hall, at the time it was a royal residence. So fragile, however, is the thread by which we connect the ambition and hopes of the present with the future, that the noble house by which the pile was raised

\* There are no charities in these parishes, but the proceeds of nine acres of land in Great Wigborough are applied to the repair of the church.

had withered from the land within a quarter of a century after it was completed; and the hall received the stranger by whom it was consigned first to neglect, and then to demolition. The family of the Marneys were owners of the lands here as early as the time of Henry the Second. William de Marney had a license from Henry III. to inclose a park here, being then "within the precincts of the forest of Essex;" and it appears that several members of the family exercised considerable influence, not only in the county, but in matters of state. Sir Henry Marney, described as "a man of great talents and bravery," was a knight of the garter, and privy councillor and keeper of the privy seal to Henry VII. and Henry VIII., by the latter of whom he was created Lord Marney in 1523. This is the nobleman by whom the hall was erected. He laid the foundation in the year 1500; and having finished it, and adorned its inheritors with a lordly title, he died within a year after he was thus ennobled. His son also died within twelvemonths after, leaving only heiresses, and thus ended the line which had been lords of Marney for four hundred years. The estate was sold, first to Sir Bryan Tuke, the Secretary of Cardinal Wolsey, then to Sir Samuel Tryon; and in the seventeenth century it came into the family of Corsellis, having been purchased by Nicholas Corsellis, Esq., a merchant of London. This family was of Dutch extraction; and it appears from an epitaph in the church, of the date of 1674, that it was connected with the introduction of the art of printing into England. The epitaph is as follows:—

"Here rests Nicholas Corsellis, Esq., lord of the manor, who is not lost, but gone before, having exchanged this life for a better, A.D. 1674, 19 day of Oct., aged 70."

"Artem typographi miratam Belgicus Anglia,  
Corsellis docuit, regis prece, munere victus,  
Hic fuit extremis mercator cognitus Indis,  
Incola jam cœlis, virtus sua fama. vivent."

The literal meaning of this is—

This Corsellis, a Hollander, at the royal request, and induced thereto by encouragement, taught the English the admirable art of printing. In the mercantile way he was noted to the furthest Indies. He is now in heaven. His virtue and fame shall live.

Morant treats this record very slightly; and other historians describe the date as utterly inconsistent with the first practice of the typographical art in this country. A close perusal of the epitaph, however, will show that the honour is not claimed for the individual who was here buried two hundred years after printing was practised in England, but for the name which he bore. The reference is not to the seventeenth but to the fifteenth century. The story is, that "Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, a prelate of considerable learning, persuaded Henry VI. to dispatch Robert Turnour, an officer of his household, privately to Haarlem, where a printing press had been set up, to make himself secretly master of the invention. Turnour persuaded Frederick Corselli, one of the Dutch compositors, after some delay, to carry off a set of letters and fly with him in the night for London. Corselli consented, and on arriving in England was set to work by the archbishop, at Oxford, where a guard was placed over him to prevent his escape. Printing was here practised by Corselli before a press was set up at Westminster." There seems no reason to doubt that this Corselli was the founder of the family of Corsellis, which for two hundred years was located here and at

Wivenhoe, and shared in the business and honours of the county. They held the estate till about twenty years ago, when it was purchased by the late Quintin Dick, Esq., and since his death has been sold to the Rev. Samuel Farman, the rector of the parish.

The stately church of Laver Marney is of a mixed character. The exterior is of red brick, and from its style much of it appears to be of about the same period as the old hall—probably it was the work of the same hand; but the interior lays claim to a much higher antiquity. Its beautiful screen, the finely decorated altar tombs, and other monuments and effigies, bear testimony to the former magnificence of the neighbourhood. The whole structure was originally cased with lead, but during the civil wars, it is conjectured at the time of the siege of Colchester, this was sold by the churchwardens, and diverted from its pious and peaceful purpose to be moulded into messengers of death, in the shape of musket balls. That this church existed from an early age is proved by the record that 529 years ago (in 1331) William de Marney founded by license in this church, a college for a warden and two chaplains, to officiate in two chantries, which are supposed to be the small buildings projecting from the south side of the chancel and the east end of the north aisle. The first Lord Marney, too, who sleeps in the chancel, built a chapel here (the eastern part of the present aisle), appointing two priests to minister therein, and “sing for his soul, the souls of his wives, and of his ancestors;” and his son, the last of his race, who was buried in the middle of this chapel, provided for a priest to sing for him perpetually; but a year or two after the Reformation came, silencing the chants, sweeping away the altar, and leaving the souls of the donors, as one of the stern old destroyers of that time phrased it, “to shift for themselves.” The effigy of the first Lord Marney lies upon a profusely decorated altar tomb, beneath an arched canopy between the chancel and north aisle, arrayed in the robes of a knight of the garter, and has been pretty well preserved; but the monument of his son in the centre of the aisle stands damp, dark, and neglected; and the beautiful alabaster figure of Sir William Marney, buried in the chancel in the early part of the fifteenth century, has been damaged and defaced by what a recent writer describes as “an unaccountable, yet common practice, which induces the thoughtless to disfigure works of art by scratching names or tasteless nonsense on the surface.”

Passing on in the direction to Colchester, we enter LAYER-BRETON, so called from the old Norman family of Le Breton, which obtained it about the time of the Conquest, but perished out of the county in 1420. J. G. Rebow, Esq., is now the lord. The only memorials of its ancient owners are some mutilated tombs in the little church, one of them to Alice, wife of Nicholas Breton, who died in 1392. LAYER-DE-LA-HAY, the ancient inheritance of the Hay family, stands on a pleasant eminence, overlooking the Roman creek; and by yonder cluster of houses, which still retains the name of Laver Cross, there formerly stood one of those crosses which in Roman Catholic times were so often to be found in market towns or villages, or at any way-side, either as rendezvous for business, or spots at which the traveller might kneel, and mutter a passing prayer. Much of the land formerly belonged to the Abbey and Priory of Colchester, and tradition says that a manor called Blind-Knights, and the Rectory, were given to



the latter for the support of a number of knightly crusaders, who had returned reft of sight and battered in limb from the wars of the holy land. In the reign of Henry VIII. these monastery lands came into the possession of the Lord Chancellor Audley; the present lords are C. G. Round and Thomas White, Esqrs.

To the right of us, verging towards the lowlands of Mersey Island and the Colne, are **PELDON** and **LANGENHOE**, of which the Waldegraves have long been the lords, having possessed the latter since 1600; and the present Countess now holds the right.\* A little to the northward is the little village of **ABBERTON**, the manors of which are owned by T. White, Esq.; and here, on the north-eastern border of the hundred, four miles from Colchester, is **FINGERINGHON**,—a town of another character in olden times, as appears from the chance discoveries of workmen who have occasionally delved into another stratum of its history. Coins and various ancient relics, the foundations of extensive buildings, and even beds of oysters have at times been found at considerable depths below the surface. This leads to the conclusion that the waters of the Colne, to which the parish extends at Wivenhoe, where there is a ferry, formerly flowed further inland, and that possibly storm or inundation has swept over the tract, burying the inhabitants of the creek in their oozy beds, and laying the foundation of a change which has replaced the water with dry land. The church-lands consist of ten acres, two roods, and eight perches. The poor have eight acres, one rood, and twenty perches, and eight tenements given by Giles Sayer, in 1793; a rent-charge on the manor for distribution in bread, left by George Frere, in 1855; and two acres, one rood, and five perches, allotted of an enclosure in 1816, are divided between the church and the poor.

**MERSEA ISLAND**, which lies below, at the confluence of the estuary of the Blackwater and the Colne, forms the furthest corner of the hundred. It is separated from the main land by the Pyefleet, in which the best Colchester oysters are nursed to that delicious perfection which ensures them a ready sale in the London market; and across it is a raised road (the Strode, or the Stronde, as it is called) covered by the tide at high water, when access to the little peninsula, except by boat, is cut off. The island, which is divided into the parishes of East and West Mersea, is of an oval shape, presenting a length of about five miles of bold commanding coast to the German ocean, and its breadth is from one and a half to two miles. This island, we know, was the residence of the Count of the Saxon shore, an officer whose duty it was to protect the neighbouring country from the inroads of the northern pirates and plunderers who then roved the seas; and there is no doubt it was a favourite residence of the Roman aristocracy when the neighbouring town of Colchester was a seat of their power. The land teems with traces of their presence. Tumuli or barrows are found in various parts, and one of these memorials gives name to Barrow Farm. Tesselated pavements of great beauty have been occasionally laid bare. One of these was uncovered at West Mersea Hall in 1730; and other fragments of the same character have since been brought to light. The church itself stands upon the site of a

\* The parish of Peldon has five acres and one rood of church-land; and there is a rent-charge of £6 on Moor Farm, given by John Comyn, in 1613, for the poor of Peldon and West Mersea.—In Langenhoe the free school has two acres of land, left by Edmund Mark in 1623.



Roman villa; many of the coffins in the church-yard rest upon these ancient floorings; and buckles, paterae, and other relics occasionally picked up, testify to the residence of the imperial rulers here. And we cannot but admire the taste which made the inhabitants of the ancient Camulodunum sojourners in the island. It is a sweet spot when the well-wooded lands are clothed in their livery of green, and the summer breeze fills the white sail as it speeds the vessel along yonder ocean highway, or shapes its course up the winding creeks to the neighbouring inland towns: but when the fog is seen curling up from the thousand acres of saltings, which are at times under water, or the wintry nor'-easter comes sweeping up from the sea, it is not a scene to arrest the step of the pilgrim in search of the pleasant and the picturesque. After the Roman had abandoned his villas and departed, and the Count of the Saxon shore had ceased his watch and ward, the island was frequently a place of refuge for the fierce Dane, who when hard pressed elsewhere, or over-matched, fled hither and stood at bay. As already seen, he braved successfully here the siege of King Alfred in 894. Along these shores have often been moored the long war vessels of the lawless invaders; and upon these mounds have frequently clustered the grim visages and the glittering battle-axes of the rough visitors, who fired our homesteads and trampled down our altars where they passed. But a change comes over the scene. The savage Dane is christianized and sinks into a peaceful partnership in the land. Most of the soil of the island passes to the church, and the cowed monk succeeds the armed warrior in the possession of these vales and the command of these headlands.

"The brigand is gone with his plunder,—no more  
The shriek of the vanquished is heard on the shore;  
The wild storm gives place to the altar's soft calm,  
And the sword and the war-cry to censer and psalm."

This was effected by the pious beneficence or the expiatory offerings of those into whose hands the lands came when the country was becoming more civilized and settled. Bocking Hall was given as early as 1006, by Atherid and Leofuine, two noble Saxons, to the Church and Priory of St. Saviour, at Canterbury; in which it continued till the Reformation; and having since passed through various hands, it is now part of the endowment of Winsley's alms-houses, at Colchester. The manors of West Mersea, Peete, and Bower Hall, were given in 1046, together with lordly rights over Winstree Hundred, by Edward the Confessor—and the grant was confirmed by the Conqueror and Henry II.—to the Priory of St. Ouen, at Rouen, in Normandy; and Roger Fitz-Ranulph founded a priory near the east end of West Mersea Church, as a cell to the parent institution. Here the brotherhood dwelt in peace, cultivating the domain, and chanting the matin service and the vesper hymn till the time of Henry V., when the priories-alien—that is all the branch houses or religious colonies belonging to monastic orders in other countries—being seized by the crown in the wars between England and France, the property was passed to the collegiate church of Higham Ferrars in Northamptonshire. A moiety, too, of Russalls or Rivers Hall, in East Mersea, was settled about 1368, by Sir John Gross, on a chantry priest of a new chapel in Bentley Church. Thus most of the produce of the island passed to the church treasury or the monastery chest. But the strong hand of Henry VIII. loosens the hold of the religious orders

on the property, and lo! another change succeeds. The Priory is gone,—the chantry priest is forgotten,—the collegiate brotherhood have been made to disgorge their manors. East Mersea Hall has passed to Mrs. May, West Mersea to the Round family, Reeves Hall to Sir W. M. Peacocke; and as we stand at Mersea Stone, the remnant of an old block-house raised to defend the passage of the Colne, and which was seized by the Parliamentarians during the siege of Colchester, we may in the season watch a far different scene to that which olden history gives up from the grave of the past—the busy oyster dredgers, who muster a fleet of 300 sail, and have embarked in the trade a capital of between £20,000 and £30,000, passing on their way, either to feed the beds which line the Colne and the neighbouring shores with the infant shell, or departing for the market with their full loads of the dainty fish,—a happy substitution for the pirate ships of the Danes which once filled these waters, and of active industry for the dull and dronish life of the olden monks.

The tower of East Mersea church is a sea-mark, and used formerly to support a beacon. Symonds, in his collection, has preserved two old epitaphs which he found in West Mersea church. One on a stone in the chancel was (translated) as follows :—

“Here lieth Master Richard Walcock, formerly vicar of this church, who died 2 July, 1468.”

The other, in the south aisle :—

“Here lieth Stephen Smyth and Elizabeth his wife, which Stephen died 8 Jan. 1496, on whose soul Jesus have mercy.”

West Mersea, which is an extensive and considerable village at the extremity of the island, has fifty-four acres, one rood, thirty perches of arable, and twenty-six acres, two roods of wood land, given by unknown donors for the repair of the church and the road or Strode leading to the island; the Sunday school is endowed with the interest of £180 left by Sarah Overall in 1813; and the poor have £3 from Comyn's charity. The school of East Mersea is endowed with the dividends of £223. 6s. 8d. Three per Cent. Consols, left by the Rev. J. Tickell, in 1812; and there are eight acres, one rood, four perches of land for the repair of the church.

## Hinckford Hundred.

This Hundred is the most extensive in the county: so extensive that for practical and judicial purposes it is divided into two—North Hinckford and South Hinckford. It includes the following 47 parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Ashen.....	The number of ashes growing here .....	1498	310	2198	390 0 0	
Alphamstone ...	The name of an owner—Alpham's town .....	1557	324	2318	440 0 0	
Braintree .....	Buck or bank, and tre, a town—the town on the hill	2242	4340	11,868	697 6 5	314 12 7
Brundon cum Ballingdon ...	The brown-hill .....	366	818		*	
Belchamp St. P.	The French words <i>beau</i> and <i>champ</i> —fair field; and ancient owners.....	2557	785	3738	288 0 0	200 0 0
Belchamp Otten		1693	397	2501	443 0 0	
Belchamp Walt.		2125	678	3961	541 0 0	194 0 0
Birdbrook .....	Brook frequented by birds .....	2386	616	3353	600 0 0	
Bocking .....	Boc, a buck, and ing, pasture—Buck-pasture .....	4607	3846	12,325	†923 0 0	
Borley.....	Boar's pasture.....	776	181	1541	†240 0 0	
Bulmer .....	Bull and mere—a lake .....	2779	807	5387	500 0 0	330 0 0
Bures hamlet.....	The Saxon word for fortification	4131	1806	2709		
Felstead .....	Fell, a hill, and stede, a place—hilly place .....	6247	1715	9620	982 17 1	506 0 0
Finchingfield .....	Finch's pasture field .....	8387	2594	11,753		271 0 0
Foxearth.....	A noted haunt of foxes .....	1640	453	2809	†396 0 0	
Geestingthorpe...	The Saxon word <i>guest</i> or <i>stranger</i> —a meadow and a village .....	2630	819	4706	520 10 0	181 0 0
Gosfield .....	Gorse or heath, and field .....	2990	595	4500		257 0 0
Halstead.....	The Saxon word <i>high</i> , and <i>stede</i> —a place .....	5633	6962	12,898	1350 0 0	470 0 0
Hedingham C.	The habitation or village at the head pasture .....	2429	1394	5375	†900 0 0	
Hedingham S.		5394	2346	9655	1515 0 0	
Great Henny ...	The Saxon word <i>hean</i> —high.....	1120	427	2214	375 0 0	
Little Henny ...	The Saxon word signifying border—Border-Town .....	410	99	622	90 10 0	
Lamarsh.....	The Saxon word <i>lam</i> , dirt, and <i>the marashes</i> ; dirty or font marsh .....	1245	409	2256	416 10 0	
Liston.....	A border village .....	631	79	1353	205 0 0	
Maplestead, Gt.	Maple-stede, Maple-place; a wood full of maples .....	1929	494	3203		†210 0 0
Maplestead, Lt.		1062	367	1471		
Middleton .....	Middle-town—a town between two other places .....	875	170	1849	400 0 0	
Ovington.....	Twa or Ton signifies village.....	705	152	985	‡556 0 0	
Panfield .....	The river Pant, or Blackwater ...	1475	275	2320	502 10 0	
Pebmarsh .....	From marshy grounds in the parish .....	2023	683	3939	683 0 0	
Pentlow .....	A hill pent by the turning of the Stour .....	1847	380	2833	518 0 0	
Rayne .....	Rey, a river .....	1676	388	2674	509 0 0	
Ridgewell .....	Rode, a cross, or name of ancient owner, and a celebrated well near the church	1717	808	2812	420 0 0	136 0 0
Great Saling ...	The Saxon word for <i>willows</i> , and <i>ing</i> —willow meadow ...	1651	336	2578	‡261 14 8†	

\* The living is annexed to Sudbury.

† The annual value.—Little Maplestead is a perpetual curacy.

‡ The benefice is a donative, valued at £20.

§ This includes Tilbury and a chapelry in Otten Belchamp, which are ecclesiastically united.

|| Of this £34. goes to Guy's Hospital, £56. 18s. 9d. to the Improprator, £126. 15s. 6½d. to the Vicar, and £25. to the Vicar of Felstead.

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.		
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.	
Steeple Bumpstead .....	Bumstede's-steeple—the first of the two Bumpsteads adorned with a steeple or spire .....	3296	1295	5305	652 2 0	400 0 0	
Shalford .....	Shallow-ford .....	2455	816	3862	500 0 0	204 0 0	
Stambourn .....	Stam, a stone, and burn, a brook—stony brook .....	1842	564	2567	505 0 0		
Stebbing .....	Steb, a stump or stock, and a meadow .....	4201	1297	6208	850 0 0	251 0 0	
Stisted .....	The Saxon word meaning path and place—the pathway .....	2967	886	4212	750 0 0		
Sturmer .....	A weir or fen of the Stour .....	940	251	1485	267 0 0		
Tilbury .....	A town or castle .....	946	300	1473	See Ovington		
Toppenfield ..	Topa, a Saxon owner—Topa's-field .....	3320	1051	4523	1106 0 0		
Twinstead .....	The Saxon word spyn and stede—a place .....	1008	207	1455	300 0 0		
Weatherfield ..	The Saxon word meaning ram, or weather, and field .....	4213	1770	6596		273 0 0	
Wickham St. Pauls .....	Wic, a farm, ham, a habitation; and belonging to St. Paul's cathedral .....	1225	425	1975	400 0 0		
Great Yeldham ..	Either the old village, or the village where the tax was paid ..	1820	716	2185	508 0 0		
Little Yeldham ..		938	306	1362	275 0 0		

The Hundred, which partakes of a mixed agricultural and manufacturing character, is about eighteen miles in length by fourteen or fifteen broad, and is computed to contain one-eighth of the whole county. It reaches from Chelmsford and Witham Hundreds, adjoining it on the south and south-west, down to the river Stour, which bounds it and separates Essex from Suffolk on the north and north-east. On the north it touches on Dunmow and Freshwell, and on the east upon Lexden Hundreds. The whole tract is in general finely undulated and richly wooded; and in the fertile vales towards the lower part of the district the hop is cultivated to some extent.

BRAINTREE, which since the passing of the Reform Bill has been treated as the capital of North Essex, the Parliamentary elections for the division being held here, is closely connected with Bocking and with Rayne. Bocking, in fact, furnishes some of the principal streets of the town, and Braintree itself was formerly a hamlet of Rayne, so that in modern associations and olden interest they are intimately blended, and their history may be considered as one. The locality is pleasant, the town being placed on an eminence between two rivers, the Pant or Blackwater, and the Brain, or as it is generally called "The Hoppett," and there is reason to believe that thus pleasantly situate, the spot was in favour with the ancient Britons, who had partially cleared and cultivated the tract ere the Romans set foot upon our shore. Some slight evidence of this is furnished by the fact that two ancient British gold coins, it is believed of the time of Boadicea—two of the very few of this character that have been discovered in the country—were found in the neighbourhood a few years ago. Whether or not the aborigines built their huts here, and sunned their painted bodies on these hill sides, it is beyond doubt that when the imperial conquerors became masters of the country, they seized upon this elevated spot, which lay upon their great military road from Colchester to St. Alban's, a fair day's march from the former, strengthened it with fortifications, and established here an important station. The wanderer in his morning walk may

still trace a huge artificial bank from the spot where stands the Baptist chapel to the point at which the Cressing road branches off from that to Coggeshall; and in other parts around the town the natural course of the land appears to have undergone changes at the hands of Roman engineers. The earth around, too, teems with proofs that this was not merely a temporary camp, but a permanent dwelling-place of these masters of the world. In the year 1828—says an interesting unpublished history of Braintree, by the late J. Cunnington, Esq. to which we are indebted for many of these particulars—an urn was found in a garden at Rayne containing 3000 Roman coins, from the Emperor Gallienus to Aurelianus, 270; another urn filled with coins, many of these of the Emperor Vespasian, was brought to light at High Garrett; articles of glass, earthenware, and copper, of the same people, have been discovered at White Notley, and elsewhere; and in fact Roman coins are so plentiful in the neighbourhood that they are constantly dug up in the gardens and other places. Here, then, the Romans formed a station, around which the people as they became subdued and civilized built their huts. This laid the ancient foundations of the town, which continued to grow through all the vicissitudes of the times, till when the Conqueror came he found it, according to the records of Domesday book, a place of greater importance than Chelmsford, and the district round about more populous. The greater part of the town, however, at that period stood about half a mile north-east of the present site, a church having been built on that spot in the time of the Saxon, and of this some fragmentary ruins, known as the old chapel, remained almost to our own time. The Bishops of London held the lordship and lands of Braintree in the time of Edward the Confessor. In early times the prelates of this see occasionally dwelt here, and exercised feudal rule over the place. Their palace stood at the foot of the hill, near the site of the present parsonage; but Bishop Ridley having resigned this lordship to Edward VI., the episcopal residence was left to decay, and at last fell a mass of dreary ruin. The property was granted to Lord Rich, from whom the Earls of Warwick inherited it; in the last century it was held by Herman Olimus. The manorial rights are now vested in T. M. Gepp, Esq., of Chelmsford. Bocking Hall was given in 1006, by two Saxon nobles, to the Priory of St. Saviour, at Canterbury; at the Reformation it was sold by Henry VIII. to Roger Wentworth, and having come into the possession of Mrs. Prisca Cobourne, the widow of a brewer at Bow, she gave it, with other estates here, to the Corporation for the relief of the Widows and Children of the Clergy. That charity still retains them, but the Nottidge family are now lords of the manor. Dorewards and other estates belong to the Honywood family, and Bocking Park farm to the Earl of Essex, who also owns the chief part of the property in Rayne, which at the time of the survey belonged to one of the conquering Normans, who had adopted the name of the parish as his own.

Braintree continued to be a hamlet or an appendant of Rayne till the time of King John or the beginning of the reign of Henry III. It was then formed into a distinct parish, and was often called Great Rayne; having, in fact, absorbed the trade and eclipsed the mother parish in importance, it gradually assumed the name of Braintree, which had been the general title applied to the locality. It was made at the same time a market town, the grant of a market having been

obtained by William de Santa Maria, then Bishop of London, on the 16th of June, 1199; as also for a fair to be held on the 21st of September, since altered to October 2nd. This fair appears to have become in time a nuisance to the inhabitants, as in 1620 the tradesmen memorialized the Earl of Warwick, then lord of the town, to reform it, alleging that it was kept up longer than the charter intended, and that fencing, bear-baiting, and other brutal sports were practised thereat. It was reformed in the reign of Queen Anne, when Herman Olimus, Esq., reduced the period of its continuance, and obtained a grant for another for the 27th of April, now held on the 8th of May. The market, ever since the issue of the patent 660 years ago, has been held on the Wednesday, first at the old market-cross, which stood at the corner fronting Drury-lane towards the east; next in the new cross, built in 1631, and which having degenerated into a mere cart-lodge, was sold, in 1837, for the site of the present registry office; and now the commercial business of the place has found goodly shelter in a handsome corn-exchange, which was erected by a company in 1839, at a cost of £3,000.

For ages the town was ruled by a self-elected body in the nature of a select vestry, of unknown origin, styled the Company of the Four and Twenty, and sometimes headboroughs, governors of the town, or town magistrates. Its sway seems at length to have become intolerable, and it was dissolved in 1714. Its records, however, contain some curious facts relative to the town. For instance, we find that in the excess of their loyalty the inhabitants went to the expense of new bell-ropes, in order to give full play to their enthusiasm when Queen Elizabeth passed through the town on her way from Leighs Priory to Gosfield Hall. Again the entries of some significant payments call up sad pictures of the ravages of the plague here in 1571, 1640, and 1665. In the latter instance it raged for a full year, carrying off 665 persons, fully one-third of the then population, not one in thirty of those attacked escaping, and making great ravages in Bocking and in Rayne. Travellers shunned the infected town. Business appears to have been suspended, the people depending upon the charity of the surrounding country for subsistence, the Earl of Warwick giving two bullocks weekly, and Lord Maynard sending thirty sheep. Part of the inhabitants fled elsewhere; others confined themselves to their houses, lest they should meet the pestilence in the shape of a stricken neighbour in their walk; and, to complete the scene of desolation, abundance of long grass was growing in the deserted streets.

"Misery hovered o'er the doomed,  
Oft shaking from her dark and drooping wing  
The poisoned dews of death."

A familiar but fearful account of the miserable condition of the place is given in the "Life of Dr. Kidder," afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells, who was then rector of Rayne. He had a young gentleman in his household who was attacked and died, and he says—

"My neighbours durst not come near, and the provisions which were procured for us were laid at a distance upon a green before my house. No tongue can express the dismal calamity which that part of Essex lay under at that time. As for myself, I was in perpetual danger. I conversed daily with those who came from infected houses, and it was unavoidable. The provisions sent into the neighbouring infected town were left at the village where I was, and near my house. Thither the Earl of Warwick sent his fat bullocks which he did every week give to the poor of Braintree. The servants were not willing to carry them further. This occasioned frequent coming from that most



infected place to my village, and indeed to my very door. My parish clerk had it when he put on my surplice, and went from me to his house, and died. Another neighbour had three children, and they all died in three nights immediately succeeding each other, and was forced to carry them all to the churchyard and bury them. We were alarmed perpetually with the news of the death of our neighbours and acquaintances, and awakened to expect our own turns. This continued a great part of the summer. It pleased God to preserve me and all mine from this noisome pestilence. Praised be his name."

It does not appear that Braintree took any special part in the turmoils and trouble which preceded and accompanied the commonwealth. It may fairly be presumed, however, that there were more roundheads than royalists in it; as it would appear by the "Life of Dr. Kidder" (before quoted) that the prevalence of dissent, and resistance to church discipline and payments, which have made the parish famous in our day, are by no means plants of modern growth, but are almost indigenous to the soil. The Doctor says—

"About the year 1664 I settled at Rain. I soon discovered that the country I was come into was very different from that which I left. The country indeed was more agreeable as to my health, but in other things the difference was great. I had lived among a people that were modest and teachable, very conformable to the orders of the church, and that showed great respect to the clergy; that paid their tithes and offerings exactly. I came to a people that were factious to the greatest degree; that endeavoured to defraud the minister of his dues, and that were very censorious and given to separation, and great inveighers against the innocent rites and ceremonies of the church. I do not say they were all such; but there was much, too much of this leaven, and it had infected a great part of this side of the country."

However this class of persons might have sympathized at first with Cromwell and the republic, they seem in the end to have become heartily tired of both, for on the sheriff coming to the town to proclaim the restored king, the inhabitants gave him an entertainment on a scale so plenteous and profuse that they were unable for several years after to pay the bill.

The manufacturing character of the town is by no means of modern date. Woollen cloths were made here as early as 1389. In an Act of Elizabeth, Bocking is described as having been for a long time inhabited by cloth makers. It was not, however, till the large flock of fugitive Flemings alighted upon the county that it began to assume an air of manufacturing importance. In Roman Catholic times, the town, being upon the highway, was often filled with bands of pilgrims to Canterbury, or devotees travelling to the shrines of St. Edmund, or our Lady of Walsingham in Suffolk and Norfolk, and lines of inns sprung up for their accommodation, on which the place flourished and grew fat. After the Reformation these inns were left tenantless; but the Flemings came just in time to turn them into factories, and save the town from decay. They flourished for a long period, particularly in Bocking; and in the last century large quantities of long bays were exported from here to Spain and Portugal. The say maker has in turn departed, but he has been succeeded by the silk and crape weaver; and here are now manufactured many of the beautiful fabrics which adorn our countrywomen or decorate the homes of the nobles of the land. The most extensive mills and factories for throwing silks and manufacturing silk goods have been established by Messrs. Samuel Courtauld and Co., in Braintree, Bocking, and Halsted. In these mills and factories between 2,000 and 3,000 hands find constant employment, the works being driven by three water wheels and nine steam engines of various powers. At the late French



Exhibition in Paris, the only gold medal of honour awarded to silk manufacturers in England was presented to the Messrs. Courtauld, in consideration of the character and extent of their productions. There are five smaller factories. That of Vavasseur and Co. is partly devoted to the production of velvets; and the firm of Messrs. Walters, conducted by Mr. Cheeseman, employing 150 Jacquard machines and nearly 300 hands, is one of the foremost in the kingdom for superiority of design and beauty of workmanship in the manufacture of furniture silks of every description. The house has a good foreign trade, and the very richest brocatelles, damasks, tissued satins, &c., which adorn the palaces of our Queen are produced in these works at Braintree.

The present church of Braintree, as appears by the will of John de Naylinghurst, an inhabitant, in which he gave two bullocks towards the work, was built about 1349, in the reign of Edward III.; the ancient edifice having fallen into decay, and being inconvenient for the new town which was growing up by the highway-side. Large additions have since been made to it, as appears by the variations of style; and we find that in the reign of Henry VIII. plays were acted in the sacred edifice, as was common in those days, in order to swell the fund for the erection of the south aisle. The church is altogether an interesting specimen of the architecture of other days; but it is more interesting from its name having become in our times famous throughout the county, and a text-word in the law books of the land. For more than twenty years, from 1836, when the first vestry meeting on the subject was held within its walls, down to 1853, when final judgment was given in the House of Lords, churchmen and dissenters were fighting the battle of church-rates over its half prostrate pillars, its mouldering aisles, and dilapidated roof; and when at length the struggle ended, and it was broadly decided that a rate for its repair could not be levied without the consent of the majority in vestry, the sacred pile was left in a state of wretchedness and ruin. Thus it lay for a time, to the great discomfort of the worshippers; but within the last few years, by means of a subscription raised by the vicar and a committee, the nave has been new roofed, the north aisle renovated, the tower and spire repaired and restored, at a cost of £1,670. The trustees of the Felstead charities, who receive the great tithes, have, too, voted £240 for an arched roof and a new east window for the chancel; so that the parochial temple begins to stand forth in renewed strength and its ancient beauty; but to complete the work on the north and south side, and in the north and south chancel aisles, and to reconstruct and fit up the interior, requires a further sum of £2,500. Most of the monuments in the church are of comparatively modern date. Against the chancel, above the altar-tomb, enclosed in a grating, is the following inscription on a brass plate:—

"This grata was ordered to be set up by the last will and testament of Samuel Collins, late doctor of physick, eldest son to Mr. Samuel Collins, hereunder buried, who served about nine years as principal physician to the great Czar, emperor of Russia, and after his return from thence taking a journey into France, died at Paris, October 26th, 1670, being the 51st year of his age."

The free school at Braintree, in which about one hundred children are educated on the national system, is endowed with £18 from a house and land in Stoke, left by James Coker, in 1702, and £45 from £1,500 stock, left by the Rev. James Burgess, in 1827. The poor have about £12. 10s. from Smith's charity (noticed in Tolleshunt D'Arcy); two

and-a-half acres, called Hyne's Croft—now nursery ground; an acre of pasture, given by John Thorne in 1571; five acres given by Alice Griggle in 1579; one acre given by Mark Mott in 1623; £2. 10s. from part of the vicarage garden, given by John Lawrence in 1626; a rent-charge of £5. 12s. 4d. out of Barksden manor, purchased with benefactor's money; three acres purchased in 1673 with £30 poor's-money; £6. 12s. 6d. from land left by John Aylett in 1707; a garden purchased with £20, left by Joseph Clarke in 1695; a rent-charge of 20s. out of land at Watford, left by John Perier in 1728. These produce upwards of £60 a-year, and are distributed in money and clothing. Besides these, Thomas Trotters gave in 1630 four acres of land and a house called Sampson's Hyde, for £4 amongst twenty aged poor; 10s. for repairing the church, 6s. 8d. to the vicar, 5s. to the churchwardens, 5s. to the overseers, and 3s. 6d. to the clerk—the surplus produce is applied to the church; Sir Stephen White also gave in 1640 a rent-charge of £6. 13s. 4d. out of a farm at Notley, for clothing and bread to six poor women; Henry Summers in 1698 a rent-charge of £7. 10s. out of a manor at Huntington, for £5 in bread to the poor, and £2. 10s. for a dinner for the trustees, minister, and churchwardens; and Ralph Polley, in 1831, left £5, the interest of £166. 13s. 4d. stock to be given in bread on the 21st of November.

Bocking church is a stately edifice, in the style of Edward III., standing about two miles north of the town; and in Roman catholic times, with its three altars—St. Mary, St. Nicholas, and St. Catharine—and five chantries attached to it, was a temple of some importance. It has been splendidly adorned of late years with stained glass windows. Till very recently, Bocking stood out ecclesiastically distinguished from all the other parishes around it. The rector is a dean, the fine old mansion pleasantly situated near the church being called the Deanery; and as the commissary of the Archbishop of Canterbury, he was head of the peculiar jurisdictions of Stisted, Latchingdon, Southchurch, Little Coggeshall, Bunsell hamlet, Callow-green in Purleigh, and Melton in Prittlewell; as well as Hadleigh, Monk's-Eleigh, and Molton, in Suffolk. An Act of Parliament, however, abolished all these peculiars, incorporating them into the respective dioceses in which they are situated; but though thus deposed from his former ecclesiastical position, the rector of Bocking still retains the nominal title of dean. There are various monuments in the church, but nothing quaint, curious, or historically important. On the wall of the north aisle of the chancel is a long record of the noble gift of Mrs. Cobourne to the Sons of the Clergy, and beneath it these lines:—

“Though Cobourne's ashes lay not here enshrined;  
Here view the lively portrait of her mind—  
Chaste, pious, liberal, good; graces that claim  
Immortal honours and a deathless fame.  
Her monument for ages yet to come  
Would'st thou behold? leave this imperfect tomb,  
Go and survey the spacious lands around,  
That fair inheritance her poor have found,  
Those virtues bore her noble soul above  
And raised this stone with gratitude and love.”

There is a free school at Bocking, founded by Dr. Gauden, and endowed with a farm at Great Leighs, let at £50 a-year, for which the master teaches a hundred boys. There are almshouses for ten

poor people, supposed to be an hospital founded by John Dorward in 1438, but the only endowment now is half an acre of garden adjoining, and a rent-charge of £2. 13s. 4d., left by Serjeant Bendlowe in 1574, out of Baylie's,—these are applied to repairs and supplying coals. The other charities are £10, given by William Martyn, in 1573, from land at Castle Hedingham; six acres, one rood, sixteen poles of land, called Wentlands, left by William Skinner in 1628; a house and croft called Arnold's, bought with £54, left by George Elkins in 1692; the interest of £40, left by the Rev. J. Jekill, and lent to the overseers in 1712; some land and buildings at Braintree, and £133. 16s. 11d. stock, left by John Mathum in 1721; the interest of £333. 6s. 8d. stock, left by Jane Tailworth in 1791; and the interest of £200 stock, given by Mr. Garrard. The produce of these is nearly £90, and it is distributed to the poor at Christmas. In addition, £13. 6s. 8d. is derived from a legacy of Joan Smith, left in 1601, for 5s. worth of bread to be given to the poor every Sunday, and the remaining 6s. 8d. to the distributor; in 1680 ten acres of land were purchased with some paid up arrears of this bequest, and £30 given by Sir Stephen White, and subsequently a house and land were bought with further savings, the whole of the proceeds being now distributed in bread. In 1707 John Aylett left a house and three acres of land, the rent to be given in linen cloth to the poor of Bocking and Braintree, and £6. 10s. is applied to this in each parish; in 1723 John Maysent left a rent-charge of 40s. out of the Queen's Head, for the repair of his son's tomb, and the residue to the poor; and Ralph Polly, in 1831, left stocks to produce £10 a-year, to be given to the poor in bread on the 21st of November. Since the commissioners' report Miss Jane Ray has left £1,666. 13s. 4d. stock, the dividends to be given to the poor, and her sister Miss Mary Ray left £1,060. 11s. 2d., for the dividends to be applied to a like charitable purpose and the repair of the family tombs.

The old church of Rayne, which was built and endowed about 1199, had an altar and chapel in the south aisle dedicated to the Virgin, alleged to be the scene of a miracle which rendered it exceedingly popular with the wedded dames of ancient days. The legend is that the wife of John de Naylinghurst—probably the donor of the black bullock to Braintree church—was dying in childbirth, on which the women in attendance flew to the altar of Our Lady of Mercy to implore her obstetrical interference, and looking up in the fervour of their devotion, they beheld the Virgin smiling assent to their prayers. Forthwith they hurried back with the news, and found the lady safe, and a little De Naylinghurst added to the household. This tale gained so much repute for the chapel of the smiling Virgin that its sacred precincts were often crowded with rotund ladies; and far and near it became a sly joke on the rush-strewn floor of the genteel of those days, in the chimney-corner of the farmhouse, and the hut of the serf, "You will soon be going to say your prayers at Rayne." The old building, the scene of these peculiar privileges, was entirely demolished in 1840, when the sacred edifice was rebuilt.

The only charity in Rayne is the dividend of £166. 13s. 4d. Three per Cent. reduced annuities, left by Ralph Polly, in 1831, which is distributed in bread.

**FELSTEAD.**—**THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.**—Felstead lies about six miles from Braintree, adjacent to Rayne, on the south-west corner of

the hundred, and is described by old historians as "exceedingly pleasant and healthy"—a description to which its high situation and general character still entitle it. It is a large village, with several outlying greens or hamlets, and a number of good farm and other houses, many of them occupied by resident proprietors, who share the ownership of the soil with Guy's Hospital; but the present lord of the manor is the Earl of Mornington. In 1059 the parish belonged to Eadwine, son of Alger, Earl of Mercia. After the conquest the principal part was given to the Abbey of Caen, in Normandy, but shared the fate of the priories-alien, and came to the monastery of Sion, in Middlesex. At the Reformation the estate was granted to Sir Richard Rich, to whom Auger, the last abbess, in 1537, handed over "the advowson of the vicarage, and whatever did of old belong to the Abbey of Caen, in Felstead and the neighbouring parishes"—a vast acquisition, says an old historian, for an hungry courtier. The property continued in the Earls of Warwick, as the descendants of Lord Rich, till the failure of the male line and the breaking up of the vast estate of this family amongst the heiresses, when most of the manorial property here, after passing through various families, was purchased by Sir Joshua Child, the founder of the Tilney family, and thus came to the Earl of Mornington. Seven years after he obtained possession of these estates (1554) Lord Rich founded the Felstead Grammar School, and in 1565 the hospital or almshouses, which now, in fact, constitute one charity,—obtaining for this purpose royal letters patent from Philip and Mary. For the uses of the school he gave a building near the church yard, with a chamber for the usher; and for the master—who, it was provided, should be in priest's orders—a house, garden, and two acres of land on the Stebbing road; and the said master and usher were to teach 80 male children born in Essex "in grammar and other virtuous and godly learning, according to Christ's religion," such male children as should be born on his own manors or farms to be first preferred. For the almshouses he provided a building to be inhabited by "five poor old impotent or lame persons, and also one grave, honest, and diligent woman, to attend to the said five poor people, and continually prepare and dress their food, wash, wring, and cherish them to the utmost of her power." Provision was made for a supply of wheat and malt to the inmates, who had also apportioned to them pasture for six milch cows, and a grove of wood. This truly noble charity was endowed with the rectories or great tithes and glebe of Braintree, Matching, and Broomfield; a farm in the latter parish; another farm of 76A. at Moreton End; a third of 21A. at Felstead; and a rent-charge of £20 out of Felstead-bury. A further sum of £500 was left for the almshouses by Lady Finch, in 1797. For a long time the school was in high repute. Three sons of Oliver Cromwell were educated there; and from its forms went forth the learned Dr. Isaac Barrow, and others whose names are remembered with honour. Even at the beginning of the present century Felstead School was well filled by the children of the county gentry. But subsequently it fell into decrepitude and decay. The endowments of the charity, which appear to have originally brought in £186. 19s. 11d., had risen to the value of nearly £2,000 yearly. The education, however, was neglected,—the property was wretchedly managed; and the school was left in such a state of desolation that when the charity commissioners came, in 1834, they found a master, with the miserable salary of £80 a year, but neither

usher nor scholars. In 1836 an information was in consequence filed by the attorney general, principally against George Finch, Esq., who, as representative of Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham, was the patron; and in 1851, after 15 years of litigation, a scheme of the court of chancery was embodied in an act of parliament to give new life to this lethargic charity. By this scheme it is provided that the school buildings shall be thoroughly repaired or rebuilt, and the master's house adapted and furnished for the boarding of at least 100 boys, each of whom is to pay a sum not exceeding £14. half-yearly; but day scholars are admitted. The school was thrown open to the whole kingdom—the children of all religious tenets resident in the county, or born of Essex parents, having the preference; the trustees having power to exempt dissenters from the church services. The instruction is extended to “the principles of the Christian religion, reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, mathematics, land measuring, geography, sacred and profane history, general English literature and composition, the Greek, Latin, French, and German languages, and such other languages, arts, and sciences, as to the trustees may seem expedient, so as to give the boys a sound, moral, religious, and useful education,” for which the scholars are to pay a capitation fee not exceeding £8; but if taught the principles of the christian religion, and Latin and Greek only, they pay nothing. The number of pupils is limited only by the capacity of the school. The salary of the head master is fixed at £200, that of the second master at £100; but the head master is to receive £5, the second master £3 for every boy from 25 up to 75, and a proportionate sum for all beyond that number. It is also provided by the scheme, that a boarding house in connexion with the school should be established (the then present master's house being for the time adapted and furnished for the purpose). For the support of this establishment each boy pays £14 half-yearly, which includes board, lodging, and washing, and as no profit is allowed to be made by the charity from this establishment, the whole amount is laid out in its current expenses. The boarding establishment is now managed by a matron, the discipline being under the charge of the masters, some of whom reside in the house. New buildings are now in the course of erection which will comprise masters' residences, boarding establishment, school-room and offices, of elegant Tudor design, which are estimated to cost, when complete, upwards of £10,000.

A house steward is also appointed to manage the establishment, with board, lodging, and a salary of £20, and a sum not exceeding 20s. for each boy, so that his payment shall not exceed £100 a-year. An annual examination is provided for, at which ten prizes are to be distributed; and power is given to the trustees should the funds permit to establish exhibitions in the school or at the universities. Eleven barrels of white herrings and eleven cades of red herrings given to the parish by the old deeds are commuted into a payment of £35 a year, to be distributed to the poor. Each inmate of the almshouses has £20 a year; the matron or superintendent £30; and the land, and allowances of wheat, malt, coals, wood, medical attendance, straw, and labour, are continued to them. The total income is now £2,212. 3s. 7d.

The ordinary charities of Felstead consist of a rent-charge of £7. 12s. out of the glebe land, left by Sidney Boteler in 1690, of which £5 is given for educating poor children and the other distributed in bread; the poor have also £2. 12s. out of Brook Farm, left by Mr. Tanner;



£2.12s. from Palmer's charity at Stansted Mountfitchet; and two cottages and five acres of land left by Arthur Wilson in 1654.

**PANFIELD PRIORY.**—About two miles to the north-west of the locality just described lies Panfield. The most interesting object in the parish is the Hall, built in a delightful spot in 1546, and enlarged 37 years afterwards by George Cotton, Esq., who came into the estate by marrying the heiress of the Langhams; but in the last century the property passed to Guy's Hospital. Though the building has since undergone the process of modernization, a quadrangular tower and clustering chimnies leave a lingering air of venerable antiquity about it. Here in early times stood one of those priories-alien, or appendants and tributaries of great monastic houses in foreign countries, which at that period were not uncommon in the land. About 1070 Waleran Fitz Ralph gave the manor of Panfield to the Abbey of Caen, in Normandy; and a priory was built as a sort of out-work of the order, that the prior might have an eye to the proper management of the estates of the mother-monastery. It stood near the church, and appears to have been of some influence and repute, as we find that the monks had a grant of free-manor in 1250. These priories-alien, however, were found very inconvenient in time of war, as a great part of their revenues was sent out of the country, and thus helped to sustain the enemy with whom England might be contending. They were, therefore, seized and suppressed in Roman Catholic times, long before the Reformation was thought of. This priory, which was represented as then in a flourishing state, was seized by Edward II. in the course of a war with France; its estates were confiscated in 1414; and a year after, this manor was granted by Henry V. to John Woodhouse, Esq., of Norfolk, to hold by the service of rendering a red rose. The monks then departed; the cell crumbled away; and the farm-house now known as the Priory is a long subsequent erection.

In this part of the hundred are a number of purely rural parishes, with their pleasant villages and clustering hamlets. **GREAT SALING**, which was formerly united with Little Saling, lying over the border in Freshwell, is perhaps one of the most picturesque. The houses are built round a green, and rows of stately elms form an avenue along the road to the church and the hall. Saling Grove, a good modern mansion, with its surrounding park, is the residence of Mrs. Fowke, the lady of the manor; but much of the land belongs to the Earl of Essex and Guy's Hospital.\* **SHALFORD**, adjoining, is principally the property of the Marriott family. The handsome mansion of Abbots Hall, so called from its having belonged to the Abbey of St. Osyth, was the residence of the late Richard Marriott, Esq., whose name as a master of fox-hounds will long survive in the memory of the lovers of the chase; and his spirit lives in his successor.† **STEBBING**, which lies at this extremity of the hundred, and extends to within three miles of Dunmow, is a place of more pretension, with the outlying districts or hamlets called Bran-end, Stebbing Green, and Stebbing Ford, and about 350 houses, scattered principally along the eastern acclivity of a valley through which runs a tributary of the Chelmer. It had formerly a market, held under a charter obtained for it by Henry De

\* The charities are 1*l.* 1*s.* 14*d.* of town land, and 20*s.* out of a house at Waltham, given by John Smith, in 1726.

† The charities of Shalford are an almshouse, founded by Sergeant Bendlowe, and endowed in 1573 with 20*s.* a year out of Baylies at Bocking; a rent-charge of 20*s.* out of Nicholls, and 10*s.* out of Iron Bridge Farm; 20*s.* out of Hill Farm is lost.

**Ferrers in 1338.** Porter's Hall, an olden mansion, has still its moat about it ; and a hill or mount, surrounded by what appears to have been once a defensive ditch, tradition says was the site of an ancient castle ; but history is silent as to any such building here. Captain Bingham, as impropriator of the rectory, which once belonged to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, is lord of the manor of Prior's Hall. The charities for the poor are two cottages and a garden adjoining the church, given by Robert Fuller and John Polly in 1588 ; 4*l.* of land at Oxen End, Little Bardfield, purchased in 1612 ; and 5*l.* of land left by John Lum, in 1786. The rents of two cottages, bought with £150, left by Frances Batt, in 1736, are applied to the parish schools.

**WETHERSFIELD** stretches in a north-easterly direction beyond Shalford. It has a good village, and many little hamlets scattered in different parts of the parish. It appears to be a place of chalybeate springs, and near the town on the Bocking road is one strongly impregnated with sulphur, which was formerly celebrated for the cure of diseases. No doubt it was one of the holy wells of ancient days, but its miracles are forgotten, and its medical properties are now neglected. Codham Hall—so called from the family of De Codham, which dwelt here soon after the conquest—had formerly an extensive park, and there was a chapel attached to it, in which divine service was performed down to the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Butler, it is said, while a visitor at the fine old mansion, penned part of his "Hudibras" in this rural retreat ; and his name, traced with a diamond by his own satiric hand, it is further asserted, was long seen in one of the ancient windows. At Blackmore End stood the ancient seat of the Nevilles, but all that remain are traces of the moat that encompassed it, and in a field near is the foundation of its chapel, upon which the ploughshare has sometimes struck. The chief mansion of the parish at the present day is the Manor-house, formerly called Dobbins, the seat of Thos. White, Esq., who is lord of the manor and owns most of the soil. This estate belonged in the middle of the last century to the Rev. Dr. White, then vicar of the parish, descended from the Clarke family, who were living here as early as 1340 ; from him it has come down to its present possessor ; and though not itself a manor, it has gradually absorbed all the others. The house is a good and handsome country mansion.

The church is a large and ancient building. In the dozing days of the establishment the chancel was at one time used as a school, and was afterwards left in so wretched a state that the sacrament was administered in the body of the church. About 30 years ago, however, after the awakening to religious feeling and respect for sacred architecture, the whole building was restored and beautified ; and with its oaken screen, piscina, and sedilia, and a battered and broken tomb, on which the inscription is obliterated—but is believed to be on some of the Wentworth family, who once held large possessions in the parish—it is not without antiquarian interest. There are 5*l.* 1*s.* 2*d.* of land, left by Richard Walford, in 1574, for repairing the church ; and Great Winsy Farm, of 105*l.* 2*s.* 33*d.*, was left by Walter Willshire, in 1634, for a Sunday afternoon and Thursday morning lecture in the church. There are schools in the town, and also one at Stammers green, endowed with a rent-charge of £25, and £10 every two years for clothing the scholars, left by Thomas Fitch, in 1702 ; a farm of 88*l.* 8*s.* 28*d.*, at Great Bardfield, left by Dorothy Mott, in 1759, 20*s.* to be distributed amongst the poor, and the remainder applied to



the schoolmistress, clothing the scholars, &c. ; and £400 left by Sarah Clerke, in 1817, after the death of Mary Newman, for building and repairing a school house. The other charities are 15A. of land, left by Richard Herward, in 1559, the produce to be expended in a weekly distribution of bread ; 2A. 2R. 15P. of land, left by Edmund Mountjoy, in 1623, half the profits to the poor and half to the lecturer at the church ; the rents of 16A. 3R. 30P. of land, and 5A. 29P. of wood, left by John Cleveland, in 1636 ; and of 6A. 1R. 3P., purchased with poor's money, in 1636, are distributed in bread. The guild or town house is for the poor, and pious uses.

FINCHINGFIELD adjoins Wethersfield, and runs from the Hedinghams up to Freshwell Hundred, which it skirts for some distance. It is a large parish, with a well built village, clusters of houses here and there a mile or two away, various neat mansions, and ancient manor-houses, too, which have about them reminiscences of old families—of the extinct races of the locality, whose names we take up with the same feeling as we do an ancient spear-head or a petrified shell. Burnt Hall, Petches, Cornish Hall, and Sculpins, were all in olden times the seats of influential and flourishing families. In the last-mentioned of these halls Sir John Marshall, about a hundred years ago, kept alight the taper of old-fashioned reckless hospitality when it had been extinguished in all other parts of the county. He provided a large bowling green, at his own expense, for the entertainment of his neighbours. Every Thursday his doors were thrown open and his table spread, and he kept open-house, as it was called, for all comers to indulge the weekly carouse of licensed revelry—with what effect upon the morals and habits of the parishioners babbling history saith not, though it dwells with unction on this last lingering specimen of the fine old English gentleman, now preserved in imagination and canonized in song. The celebrated Puritan divine, the Rev. Stephen Marshall, a member of the assembly of divines in Cromwell's time, and a jealous hater of episcopacy, appears to have been a member of this family ; and in an old account-book of the parish there appeared the following entry in his hand, the words of which will sound strange in Puritan ears of the present day :—

" March 17, 1682.—Memorand. the day and year above written. I, Stephen Marshall, vicar of Finchingfield, having eight dayes since lycenced, so farre as in mee lyeth, Mrs. Dorothy Meade, and Anne, the wife of James Chaplaine, and Susannah, the wife of James Choate, to eat fleshe in their knowne sickneses, and their sicknes still abiding upon them, as is notoriously knowne, I do, therefore, as is appointed by the laws, still allow the said Dorothy and Susannah and Anne, so farre as in mee lyeth, to eate flesh, as is allowed by the statute, so long as their sicknes shall continue, and no longer.—By me, STEPHEN MARSHALL, Vicar of Finchingfield.

Witnesses of this to be done and allowed the day and yere above written.

JOHN STOCK, JAMES MAYSENT, Church-wardens."

THE SEAT OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL RUGGLES BRISE.—Spains Hall, the seat of Lieutenant-Colonel Ruggles Brise, was given by the Conqueror to Alan, one of his Norman followers. From him it passed to Alberic De Vere, under whom Henry De Ispanio, or Spain, held it, and his family, which dwelt here for generations, left his name impressed upon it. After them it was held by the Kemps, and then by the Dyer family, till in 1760 it was purchased by Samuel Ruggles, Esq., of Bocking, who was descended from the celebrated wit and scholar, the author of the Latin play called Ignoramus, which so delighted James I., and who belonged to a family which had "gentleman of note" as early as 1298. They appear to have taken their name from Rugeley,

in Staffordshire, and one of them was sheriff for that county and Salop in the reign of Edward III. A younger branch of the family settled in Suffolk, and in 1680 removed to Bocking. Thomas Ruggles, Esq., who succeeded the purchaser of Spains Hall, was an author of high literary acquirements, and from him it has descended to the present owner, who is the chief lord of the parish. A manorial mansion stood on this spot in very early ages; but the present hall is of the time of Elizabeth. It is a fine old building, standing in a good park, its front here and there mantled with ivy, and its architecture little impaired by modern innovation. The old iron-studded door has been religiously preserved on the outside of almost every apartment, but a more cosy one of modern fit has been added within. It is altogether, as it has been described, "a fine specimen of the domestic architecture of the period to which it belongs."

The church stands on a fine eminence, and had formerly a lofty spire on its stone tower, but this was blown down in 1702, when a high wind levelled eighteen barns and other buildings in the parish. A neat district church was erected by subscription at Cornish Hall End, in 1841, for the accommodation of that part of the parish. In Roman catholic times there was a guild called Trinity guild, established for the support of a priest, endowed with property which, valued at the suppression at £6. 14s., was granted to William Mildmay, Esq. The mother church contains some remnants of once magnificent tombs; and in the south aisle of the chancel, or Kemp's chapel, is the following extraordinary inscription—

"Here lies William Kemp, Esq., pious, just, hospitable, master of himself so much that what others scarce doe by fine he did by a voluntary constancy—held his peace for seven yeares, who was interred June 10th, 1628, aged 73."

The story which lingers in the neighbourhood as an explanation of this epitaph is, that this Mr. Kemp who was the owner of Spains Hall, sincerely loved his wife, and having in the heat of passion, provoked by some little fireside bickering, uttered words which cast an unwarrantable reflection upon her, he was so smitten with conjugal remorse that he sentenced himself to seven years' silence. This he religiously kept, accompanied, too, with hard labour—for tradition, with a pious moral and a solemn shake of the head, further points to seven fish-ponds at Spains Hall, one of which he excavated in each year of his period of penitence.

There are alms-houses in the parish, given by Sergeant Bendlowe in 1567, which, having been rebuilt by the parish forty-four years ago, are occupied by twelve poor widows; an endowment for them of 26s. 8d., which the sergeant gave, has been lost. A house called the Guildhall, near the church, was given as an almshouse for widows, by Robert Kemp, in 1630. Sergeant Bendlowe also left a rent-charge of 40s. out of lands at the Sampfords, 13s. 4d. for repairs of the church, and the rest to the poor, who have also a rent-charge of £10 out of Spains Hall, left by William Kemp, in 1623; the rent of a cottage and three acres of land, for fuel, left by Stephen Marshall, in 1650; twenty perches of land, on which formerly stood two tenements in Howe-street, given by James Harrington, in 1584; and the interest of £45 left by John Legerton in 1828. Sir Robert Kemp gave Park Field, of thirty-eight acres, £12 to be applied to a school-master for teaching twelve boys, £6 to the vicar for catechising them, £8 for a monthly distribution of bread, £1. 10s. for fuel for the almshouse at the Church-gate, and £7. 10s. for repairs and incidental

expenses ; for educational purposes the parish has also the fourth part of the rent of Messings Farm, left by Ann Cole, in 1730, of which £15 is applied to the Sunday school, and on week days twenty-five free scholars are taught.

**STISTED.**—**THE SEAT OF O. S. ONLEY, Esq.**—At High Garrett, a pleasant hamlet of Bocking, Samuel Courtauld, Esq., has, at a cost of £2,000, built an elegant school-house, fitted up with an organ and used as a chapel on Sundays, while near by is a neat house for the mistress and another for the minister. The road here branches off, one taking the direction of the Hedinghams, the other leading to Halstead. Pursuing the latter we pass through part of Stisted, the pleasant village of about 200 houses lying to the right, on the high ground above the northern side of the valley through which flows the Blackwater. This parish came very early into the hands of the religious. In 1046 it was given by Earl Godwin and Wlfgith, the widow of a Saxon noble, to Christ's Church, Canterbury, to sustain the bodies and cheer the souls of the monks, being specially devoted to their table. At the conquest there was a struggle over the prey. Bishop Odo grasped it amongst other fair and fat morsels. The monks recovered it at the great trial at Penenden heath; but "the law's delay" was felt even in this olden period, for the property does not seem to have been fully restored to its original purpose till 1106. In 1364 Edward III. granted the monks free-warren over their lands here, and they continued lords of the parish till the dissolution. The property was then granted for a short time to the dean and chapter of Canterbury, but soon came into the hands of Lord Rich, who sold it; and in 1763 the chief manor passed, through marriage with an heiress of the Savill family, to the Rev. Charles Onley, the grandfather of the present possessor, Onley Savill Onley, Esq., who owns most of the soil, but the manor of Rayne Hatch and Boultwoods belongs to Clopton's Hospital, at Bury. The hall or manor-house, which was described a hundred years ago as "an exceedingly good old mansion," was demolished in 1826, and in its place has risen up a large and handsome building—the family seat of the Onleys—situate on an eminence, in a finely wooded park of about 100 acres, which falls gradually and gracefully down to the Blackwater. The mansion is an extensive pile, with a large and noble portico, supported by pillars of the Ionic order; and has fine gardens and grounds about it.

The church, which appears to have been larger than at present, and had attached to it a guild of St. Mary, founded in 1471, presents a fine modern instance of what may be called the old-fashioned piety which first erected our houses of prayer. Mr. Onley, as lord of the parish, though not patron of the living, entirely rebuilt the tower in 1844, placed in it five bells, and enriched other parts of the sacred edifice with stained glass. The poor of the parish have £12 a-year out of Stisted hall estate, left by the Rev. Charles Onley, in 1802, for distribution in coals; and the parish has the right to send children to the grammar school at Earls Colne.

**GOSFIELD HALL**—**THE SEAT OF SAMUEL COURTAULD, Esq.**—The parish of Gosfield, which lies a little away to the northward, on the road to Hedingham, partakes of the character of rural beauty common to the district, and is distinguished by its noble hall, whose park and plantations skirt the road up to the little village on the hill-top. This parish finds no name in Domesday Book. It was at that time swallowed up in the great surrounding lordships, chiefly in that of Hedingham,

but was separated about the time of Henry II. For ages after the conquest, the Hall—or Bellows, as it was called, from a family of note which dwelt here in the reign of Edward I.—formed part of the demesne lands of the honour of Hedingham, belonging to the De Veres, Earls of Oxford. Subsequently the parish was split up into various manors, and divided amongst different owners. Parts of it were subjected to confiscations, seizures, and sales, the effects of the political fortunes of the times, or the private extravagance of the owners. These manors, however, became re-united in the last century, being severally purchased by John Knight, Esq., and his widow afterwards married John Nugent, Lord Viscount Clare, who made the Hall his residence. This noble family dwelt here at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century; and when, in the political storm which swept over the continent, the Bourbons became wanderers from France, Louis XVIII. and others of the royal fugitives shared the hospitality of the Marquis of Buckingham, and found safe shelter at Gosfield.

The Hall seems to have been erected about the time of Henry VII., just at the period when the houses of the gentry were ceasing to be military garrisons; and it appears to have been a sort of cross between the modern mansion and the old castle. It forms a large quadrangle, the ground floor originally having no windows on the outward side, while those above were strongly protected, so as to be able to offer stout resistance to a foe; but from the interior of the court the buildings presented a more domestic and peaceful appearance. Great changes, however, have been effected, and little now remains to furnish an idea of the olden aspect of the Hall. Mr. Knight rebuilt the north, east, and south fronts; Earl Nugent and others made many alterations; and the present owner has completed the improvements which have converted the pile into an elegant modern mansion of the nineteenth century.

The Hall, the manor, and most of the lands of the parish were ten years since in the possession of E. G. Barnard, Esq., for some time member for Greenwich; and after his failure the noble mansion lay deserted and desolate, the property being too gigantic for any ordinary purchaser. Five or six years ago, however, it was bought by Samuel Courtauld, Esq., the head of the great firm of silk and crape manufacturers whose establishments extend over Braintree, Bocking, Halstead, and Sudbury, who by a large outlay has restored the old hall to life, and fitted up and adorned it in a style of modern elegance equal to any edifice in the county. The settlement of the Courtaulds in England may be traced to the same cause to which we owe so much of the mercantile enterprise, and so many of the flourishing families of the land—religious persecution on the continent. Augustine Courtauld left France and came to England after the revocation of the edict of Nantes. The family engaged in trade, and for three generations were goldsmiths in London. They are now at the head of the branch of manufactures in which they are engaged, the firm paying more than £2,000 a-week in wages in this district; and the senior representative of the family is giving it root at Gosfield as lords of the soil.

Even as we approach the village, we cannot but mark the change which the great magician, waving the all-powerful wand of money, has wrought in the domain. Neat brick cottages, fitted up with every convenience, are provided for the labourers and other dependents of the

estate at a rental of 2s. a week ; and close to the park gate some old houses that were at one time left uninhabited and open to the weather, for vermin to run in and out at leisure, have given place to a spacious lecture-room, which is also used as a day and evening school. As we quit the high-road and follow the winding carriage drive, which is provided with gas-lamps—a novelty in a rural district—we pass on the right an extensive range of what may well be described as model stabling, with apartments marked by every care for the comfort and healthful housing of the attendants ; and sweeping round the mansion to the left, we are at the west front of the Hall. Neither in this part, nor on the east, nor in the sides opening into the quadrangle, has much change been made, beyond a careful and complete restoration of the old Tudor architecture. The south or lake front, however, has been completely remodelled. The style has been thoroughly changed. The narrow stone window frames are gone ; the little diamond pane has given way to broad plate glass ; and the whole bears about it an air of modern fashion and freshness. As the eye turns from the mansion on this side it wanders over a delightful scene of green-sward, water, and woodland. Immediately in front of the house is a level open lawn, with tasteful little parterres, statuary and vases, flanked on either side by a large and finely executed model of the forest stag. Below, the turf slopes to the distant lake, whose waters cover 100 acres of land, and upon it are seen three little yachts, which form, when their thin masts are up and their white sails spread, a pleasing feature in the scene. Beyond rise the thick woodlands and belting trees ; and these, when dressed in their summer foliage—

“ Fling their dark shadows on the margin wave,  
A fretted frame-work to the watery mirror.”

On the northern side a short line of huge elms marks the direction of an avenue which once stretched away a mile and a half into lands long since severed from the park and now cultivated as corn fields. The park is studded in other directions with fine old trees, of enormous girth and spread, many still in full vigour, others white and tottering beneath the crumbling touch of centuries. On the north side, after passing upon the lawn Baily's statues of “The Maiden preparing for the Bath,” and the “Tired Huntsman,” we enter a thickly wooded tract, broken up, however, by long green walks and pleasant glades, and opening vistas ; while here the giant cedar spreads its broad arms, or there the weeping holly flings down its pendant branches, falling from a height of at least 25 feet to the ground like gauzy folds of graceful drapery. In the midst of this sylvan scene we found the bricked sides and furnace of an unromantic looking copper. On inquiring what this meant, we learned that on the Sunday afternoons of summer, and on other occasions, these grounds are thrown open to the public, when they are frequented by hundreds, who, drawing their sober supplies from this copper, range themselves in parties on the rustic seats formed of prostrate fir trees, placed purposely by the walk sides, and enjoy the friendly cup and the fresh free air.

The interior of the Hall has undergone even greater improvement than the grounds without. We look up for the old whitewashed ceilings which satisfied our ancestors, and the eye feasts on the elaborate and tasteful handiwork of the decorator and gilder. The cunning hand of the experienced craftsman has in several of the apartments brought out the ancient carved wainscoting in all its richness, and in others adorned the walls with the beautiful touches of modern art. Not a



nook or a passage has been left unrestored or unembellished. In an hour's walk through the old Tudor Hall, our pen is encumbered in recording within the scope of our page the harmonious manner in which the taste and luxury of the present have been wedded to the home of the past. We can only glance as we pass at the principal apartments, whose elegance challenges our admiration, or whose legends and recollections call up feelings of historical interest. On entering the noble hall the eye is attracted by a pair of large and beautiful Egyptian alabaster vases, one on either side of the grand oaken staircase, adorned with figures standing out in sharp and delicate relief. Near by is another vase of Italian alabaster, equal in beauty of execution, an exact copy of one in the Vatican at Rome. Turning from this we are encountered by a fine antique, Achilles wounded; then by marble busts of Mr. and Mrs. Courtauld, by Baily, in the finest and most faithful style of that artist. Halting for a moment before the other various works of art, we lingeringly and reluctantly quit this apartment, and enter the dining saloon, 40 feet long by 29 wide, and 30 high,—the noble room in which the old exiled Bourbons were accustomed to dine in state when driven from their palace home and compelled to eat the stranger's bread. All is in excellent keeping. The colour and character of the walls, sideboards, and fittings—the massive oaken chairs, antequely carved and adorned with the Courtauld arms—the ancient allegorical fresco in the centre of the ceiling, which has been well restored by Battam, and adorned at the corners with medallions of Titian, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Correggio,—the mantel-piece of pure and massive marble, supported on either side by statuary figures,—all convey an idea of grandeur worthy of the recollections of royalty which hover around us as we pace the apartment, and listen to the tale of how the feast was arranged when the Prince of Condé sat at yonder table-head. Over the fire-place is a splendid painting of the Fruit Gatherers by Murillo, from the Orleans gallery; along one side of the saloon are ranged portraits of the leading members of the Courtauld family for five generations past; and at the lower end we pause at that world-famed group, the Laocoon. This is said to be the only copy of full size ever executed in marble, and to have been purchased or purloined by the first Napoleon, in Italy, and to have been packed ready for transmission to Paris, when Waterloo cut short the career of the imperial plunderer. We proceed on through passage and gallery, glancing at a statue or pausing a moment before a Cuyp or a Morland, or other paintings on the walls; and then enter the brown drawing-room. Here a superb effect is produced by the dark panelling of the walls, the richly gilded roof, the large and splendid lustres, and a pair of fine alabaster vases, standing about eight feet high, and, like those in the hall below, capable, when night sets in, of being lighted up in the interior with gas, which imparts to them a golden hue, and throws their sculptured figures out in dark relief. A number of beautiful little statues adorn one side of the apartment. Progressing onward through the Hall, we glance in at the suites of sleeping apartments, and find each complete in itself and tastefully fitted up. We now enter a gallery extending 120 feet along the northern front,—called Queen Elizabeth's banqueting room, from its being the spot where the sovereign, so firm in her politics and religion but so fickle in her favours, was feasted with her friends and ruffled courtiers in her various visits to Lady Rich, or when she

tarried here for five days as the guest of Lady Maltravers in her progress through this part of the kingdom, in August, 1597. The elaborately carved oaken panel of the walls has been cleared from the paint with which some barbarous hand had daubed it, and carefully restored, and now appears as fresh as when the royal eye glanced along it, or the officer on guard rested his sword-hilt against its fretted work. The apartment is now used only for the dance or for private theatricals; but at the lower end is a figure, nearly life-size, of Lady Nugent, enclosed in a glass case, which has recently been removed here from the neighbouring church, illustrative of an old legend of the Hall—for what old hall is complete without its strange legend or its tale of terror? We have heard the story at the fireside of our infancy, far away from hence, as a warning against Sabbath breaking, telling how her ladyship, who dared on the sacred day to stitch the fatal glove lying by her side, pricked her finger, and perished for her iniquity. We now pass on to the south drawing-room, a delightful apartment, with a row of Sienna pillars forming the projection in the front of the building into a sort of arcade, whose windows command the lawn and lake. The walls and ceiling are of cream colour and gold, and the chairs of rich blue satin and gilded backs, corresponding with the other fittings, give to the room an air of chaste yet costly elegance. In this apartment is deposited the handsome piece of plate presented to Mr. Courtauld by the inhabitants of Halstead in 1839; and ere we descend the grand staircase, on which we find some good paintings and some beautiful works of art in marble and bronze, we pause on the landing before the costly and exquisitely-finished testimonial accorded to the same gentleman for the part which he took in the battle of the Braintree church-rate. As we have been passing through these parts of the hall, as well as the tasteful library, family dining room, card, billiard, and other apartments, which are all in keeping with those described, we have felt nothing of the cold west wind we heard blustering without, the whole mansion being heated to an equal temperature by hot pipes fitted up by Hood, and so nicely adjusted that any part or passage may be shut off without the other portions being at all affected.

Gosfield Place, the seat of B. Sparrow, Esq., is a handsome modern mansion, standing in a good park which skirts the road on the opposite side of the village.

In the little church which stands upon the margin of the park are several tombs of ancient owners of the estate, some of them apparently of members of the Grey and Westworth families, but they were robbed of their brasses during the civil war. In a little north chapel, built 500 years ago for a chantry priest, is a superb monument nearly twenty feet high and ten wide, executed by Scheemacher, with full-length effigies of John Knight who died in 1733, and other members of that family; and on a white marble tablet is the following epitaph, which tradition says is from the pen of Pope—

“Oh fairest pattern to a falling age,  
Whose public virtue knew no party rage:  
Whose private name all titles recommend,  
The pious son, fond husband, faithful friend.  
In manners plain, in sense alone refined,  
Good without show, and without weakness kind;  
To reason's equal dictate ever true,  
Calm to resolve, and constant to pursue.  
In life with every social grace adorned,  
In death by friendship, honour, virtue mourned.”



The only charity in the parish is a rent-charge of 10s., left by Edward Hunt, in 1605, out of a house called Hobbys-with-Cocks, but this is not paid.

The HEDINGHAMS adjoin Gosfield in the direction of Sudbury, Sible Hedingham being by far the largest and most populous, but the least interesting to the traveller. It has few houses of much modern pretension, and but one about which there hovers an olden historical memory—Hawkwoods, on the left hand side of the village, nearly opposite the Swan, which was the ancient home of the Hawkwood family, who it appears, from the various symbols of a hawk about the edifice, built the church about the reign of Edward III. An old historian gives the following as to the foundation of this family:—

“This town is made most famous by being the birth-place of Sir John Hawkwood, the son of Gilbert Hawkwood, a tanner here. He was bound apprentice to a tailor in the city in London, where being pressed into the service of King Edward III., then about to make war in France, he behaved himself so bravely that he was made a captain and then knighted by that king. The French wars being at an end, he offered his service to the States of Florence, in which he signalized himself so much that Barnaby Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, gave him his daughter Domnia to wife, by whom he had a son named John, born in Italy, but naturalized and knighted in England in the eighth year of the reign of Henry IV. He died an aged man in 1394, and was buried in the cathedral church of Santa Maria Florida, at Florence, where that republic, out of gratitude to his memory, and extraordinary deserts, have honoured him with a statue on horseback, and a noble monument under the name of Giovane de Acuto. But his friends, who admired his worth as much as the Florentines, were not content that he had a monument where his body lay, but they erected one to his honour in this church, arched over and engraved in the likeness of hawks flying in a wood, and showing him to be a native of this place.”

A fragment of the superb arch of this monument may still be seen on the wall of the south aisle of the church, but the monument itself, and the inscription which it bore, were ruthlessly destroyed nearly a century ago, in ungrateful forgetfulness of those by whose pious munificence this handsome place of public worship was raised. The Hawkwood family founded a well-endowed charity here, and another in the church of Castle Hedingham, to secure prayers for the souls of Sir John and his military companions, the dwelling of the chantry priest being the house now called Hostages, and which had originally been a charitable foundation for the entertainment of pilgrims.

The charities comprise a farm of 34A. called Barnards, given by Sir J. Green and Richard Herward, in 1516, to pay common burthens of the inhabitants, and the surplus to the poor; nearly the whole was long applied to the repair of the church. Thomas Jegor, in 1672, left a rent-charge of £6. 18s. 8d., out of Glasscocks, for a weekly distribution of bread; the Rev. Moses Cook, in 1732, left seven acres of land, the proceeds to be distributed yearly by the rector, in bibles and prayer books, to the poor. There is an alms-house of four tenements, which was endowed by Sergeant Bendlowe, in 1571, with 20s., but this is not now paid; a cottage given by Edward Rich, in 1579, and the Pest-house, given by Thomas Aubrey, in 1516, are occupied by poor, the garden of the latter being let; 14s. 4d. for the poor out of Henry VIII's charity was paid out of the Exchequer till 1829, but was then stopped.

THE FAMILY OF DE VERE—THE CASTLE.—We have now reached Castle Hedingham, and in this quiet little village, surrounded by occasional hop-gardens, we behold the head of the great barony of the De Veres, reputed to be one of the most ancient families in the world.

The first we hear of them in English history is at the conquest, when Alberic De Vere came in with the new sovereign, and received amongst other spoil the great lordship of Hedingham, where the family soon after built their castle and fixed their home. The name of the Earls of Oxford thenceforth became, as already recorded, prominent in public affairs and all powerful in this district. Here the family remained rooted for 558 years,—the longest space of time, it has been stated, that any family of our English nobility kept so considerable an estate, producing twenty earls in succession. At last this noble fabric was sapped by the freaks of a spendthrift—Edward the seventeenth earl, who squandered away estates, alienated property, pulled down buildings, and cut up parks for sale. As an illustration of his extravagance it is recorded that he rode into London preceded by eighty gentlemen in dresses of Reading tawney and gold chains about their necks, and followed by a hundred tall yeomen in liveries. Stowe states he was the first who brought “perfumed gloves and such fineries” into the kingdom. The earl having thus passed like a blight over the patrimony, in 1625 the withered honours fell into the hands of a female, and altogether passed away. In 1713 the property was sold to Robert Ashurst, Esq., from whose family the present owner, Ashurst Majendie, Esq., is descended. The remnants of the old castle are seen long before reaching the locality, crowning the high hill-top above the village. The building in its perfect state was lofty and magnificent, being built not for purposes of defence alone, but to exhibit the grandeur of the noble family which inhabited it. It is believed to have been erected by the second De Vere in the reign of King Stephen; and in the days of its strength its walls and outworks extended much further along the hill in the direction of the modern mansion. It had three parks belonging to it, one the Castle Park in which the building stood, another of upwards of 600 acres, extended into Gestingthorpe, and the third called the Little Park, stocked with red deer, stretched down the hill side, to what is now the high road. The inner court or *ballium* of the castle comprises about three acres. The whole of this was formerly covered with towers and buildings, most of which were erected soon after the battle of Bosworth, and their destruction was effected not by the slow decay of time or the quick hand of war, but through the policy of the villagers. In the Dutch war of 1666 it was intended to confine here the prisoners taken in the naval engagements, but the inhabitants, by no means coveting the company of the captives and their guard, and the corrupted groups which in those days used to gather round a war prison, reduced the buildings to a ruinous state and thus escaped the contagion. The old fortress, which stands on a natural eminence, well improved by art, must before the invention of cannon have been a place of immense strength. The only approach is by the east, and the steep precipitous descents on the south, west, and north-west must have rendered an assault from these sides exceedingly difficult. The great tower or keep alone remains, and this is built principally of flints embedded in grout and faced with square stones. The wall on the outer side is thirteen feet thick at the bottom and about ten feet thick at the top; its size is fifty-five feet by sixty-two, and it rises to the height of upwards of one hundred feet; but most of the parapet wall, the battlements, and two of the turrets with which it was crowned have been destroyed. The archi-

ecture is pure Anglo-Norman. The tower portion can be entered by two openings made through the solid wall about 150 years ago for the purpose of converting this apartment—where many a stout old warrior has laboured to stem the waves of war that rolled without, and where many a prisoner has turned his chains and wept—to the ignoble purposes of a wood-house and shed for cattle. Access to the other apartments is obtained by the original and principal door on the west side, which is reached by a flight of steps, and at the sides the grooves of the portcullis are still discernible. The apartments in the five stories differ materially.

“At the bottom,” says the late Lewis Majendie, Esq., in a letter published in *Vetusta Monumenta*, “where the danger was most apparent, the walls are thickest, and the aperture is a mere loop hole, simple in its form, sufficient only to admit a scanty light, and to allow the discharge of offensive weapons from within; above, the windows increase in size, and are somewhat ornamented; above these the apertures are still larger, with similar embellishments; in the next story the windows are double, admitting more air and light; and in the upper or attic story they are richly ornamented with the usual zig-zag of that age; thus, in proportion as the distance from danger was increased, the architect seems to have introduced into his structure air, light, and ornament.”

The most splendid apartment in the castle, and that which awakens vivid associations connected with olden days, is the hall of audience and ceremony, on the third story. The size of this room is 38 feet by 31, and its height to the roof 28 feet, but a noble arch spans it seven feet lower. It is surrounded by a spacious gallery cut into the wall, with openings at intervals, from which a spectator could command a full view of what was passing below. In this chamber the ancient barons received the homage of their feudal tenants, and entertained their visitors in all the ostentatious hospitality of the times. And here, thought we, as we paused at one of the openings of the gallery, has the bright eye of beauty watched the gay cavalier in the train below, and welcomed back her crusader knight with a wave of the treasured love token. Here gathered the chieftain and his warriors in council when the castle was beleaguered by the army of King John, in 1215; and again, ere it fell to the Dauphin of France, two years afterwards. Here has trod the light foot of Queen Maude, who died within these walls in 1152. Here was feasted Henry VII. with such splendour as to draw down on the host the ungenerous envy of the sovereign whom he had saved, as already recorded. From hence issued mandates which were law in the surrounding hamlets. But when we first visited it, twenty years ago,—

“The spider was weaving a woof,  
Making his loom of the sculptured roof;  
The slug was leaving his slimy stain,  
Trailing his way o’er the Gothic pane;  
Weeds had gathered, and moss had grown  
On the topmost ridge and the lowest stone;  
And the wheeling bat came flapping his wing  
On the walls that had circled a banqueting king.”

Since then, however, the spider has been put to flight,—the slime has been cleared away; and the old hall, heaving with the political passions of our own day, has echoed the eloquent periods of the modern statesman. The Right Hon. B. Disraeli held high festival here with his supporters some years ago; and since then an antiquarian gathering and several religious meetings have taken place in the apartment—the sounds of feasting, the words of prayer, and the voice pleading for

the promotion of Protestant principles, have been heard in the long-desolate home of the De Veres. The platform, or roof of the castle, commands a splendid view of the surrounding country; and immediately below us, within a few rods of the old castle-wall, lies the modern mansion, the seat of A. Majendie, Esq., built by Robert Ashurst, Esq., in 1719—forming, in its freshness, its well-kept grounds and gardens, and its green lawn in front sloping down to a distant sheet of water, a striking contrast in the picture to the mouldering ruin on which we stand.

While the castle continued the seat of the powerful earls all around partook of its dignity and importance. The little village below the hill then asserted the dignity of a town. It had its weekly market on Monday, held under a charter granted by King John, confirmed by Henry VII., and its three fairs yearly. A little to the south-east of the castle, and almost as ancient, stood an hospital—sometimes called the New Abbey—with its chapel, its own burial ground, and two or three chaplains to perform divine service. It was founded by the fourth earl in the reign of Henry III., and well endowed, the functions of the officials being to “pray for his own soul, the souls of his wife, ancestors, and heirs, and to exercise hospitality in relieving poor and impotent persons.” The first part of this duty was suppressed at the Reformation—the latter was continued down to about 1700, when there were two poor persons dwelling in the ruinous buildings; but the dilapidated structure was soon after demolished and cleared away. Here, too, was a nunnery—founded by the first earl in 1190, for black-veiled nuns of the Benedictine order, dedicated to God, St. Mary, St. James, and the Holy cross, and endowed with the rectories of this parish and Gosfield, with other property in the district. Lucia, the wife of the earl, became the first prioress; in fact she is sometimes called the foundress; and she appears to have been of considerable consequence amongst the monastic dignitaries of the times, as at her death prayers were said for her soul in Westminster Abbey and fifty other churches. The black-veiled devotees appear to have pursued their devotions in prosperity and quiet, respected by the turbulent spirit of the time, and not much affected by the occasionally varying fortunes of the De Veres, as we find little mention of the nunnery in several succeeding ages. At its suppression in 1535, when it possessed upwards of 250 acres of land, its revenues were valued at £29. 12s. 10d., and its property being granted by Henry VIII. to the family of the founders, John Earl of Oxford being then a high officer of state, became incorporated with the De Vere estates. Its chapel was standing less than a century ago, but has since given place to the modern farm building. Nor did the locality in those days lack its wonderful and healing spring. At the end of the town was a well famed far and wide for the miracles worked by its waters in the cure of diseases; and as they knew nothing of joint stock companies and lumping dividends in those days the medicinal virtues of the well were attributed to saintly or celestial influence, and, instead of a pump-room, a chapel dedicated to St. James was built in the field opposite to it, where the limping and diseased pilgrims might make their offerings and recite their prayers.

The church of Castle Hedingham is a noble Gothic structure, built it is believed, from the boar and mullet carved on some of the windows and on the roof, by the Earls of Oxford, about the time of King John,

and on the site of a smaller edifice, which was dedicated to St. James. The roof and screen present some fine old carvings. We naturally look around for the tombs of the De Veres, but, though there are traditions of the barons being buried here in princely state, and their armour, swords, spurs, and banners not long since were hanging in the chancel, we find only one, a noble monument of marble in the chancel, to the 15th Earl of Oxford, of the date of 1539, bearing effigies of that noble, his wife, and family; but the brass containing the legend which encircled them was torn away in the troublous times of Cromwell. There are inscriptions to members of the Ashurst family, buried here in the last century.

There are various almshouses in the parish: the church almshouses, three tenements built before the 16th century; two founded by Dunstone Baldwin, in 1586; four founded by Edward Brewer, in 1612, and endowed with a rent-charge of 40s. out of land at Sible Hedingham; and four left by the Hon. John Vere, in 1612, endowed with £5. a year out of Ovington Hall; a cottage and garden, purchased with £20. left by the Countess Dowager of Oxford, in 1630; and two cottages at Pye Corner, purchased with poors money. The poor have a rent-charge of 10s. out of Wyths Field, left by John Alliston, in 1629; and in 1780 Giles Salmon left £10. and a cottage for poor dissenters; the cottage was pulled down and sold, and the money invested, the interest being divided amongst the indigent of the dissenting congregation. The poor have also £5. from Martyn's charity, arising from land left in 1573.

HALSTED, an improved and improving town, which has had the spirit to carry out its own railway, is the capital of this part of the Hundred, and has its petty sessional division and its county court. It stands picturesquely on the banks of the little river Colne, from which its broad main street rises to a bold hill-top on the eastward, and its houses, churches, and silk factories extend to both sides of the stream. The high-lands around afford pleasant rural scenes; the suburbs are dotted with good modern mansions; and though we have not learned that any relics of the remoter ages of our history have been brought to light in the immediate neighbourhood, there is evidence that this was a town of some extent, and a seat of power, before the Norman set foot within it. The lordship of Halsted, in fact, included not merely the lands in the immediate vicinity, but in nine or ten other parishes around. Godwin owned part of the property here in the reign of Edward the Confessor; but after the conquest we find it split up into smaller manors and divided between the three great Normans—Fitz-Gilbert, De Waren, and Robert Malet, Lord High Chamberlain of England. Subsequently to this the different estates became the residences of families more or less noted in history, several of which have left their names stamped upon the old mansions of the parish. Dines Hall took its title from a great family which possessed it from the time of King John till the reign of Edward II.; but this, with other small subject manors, was long since absorbed in Bois Hall, at the upper end of the town on the road to Sudbury, and was so called from the family of De Bois, its owners, of some repute in the county, one of whom was sheriff in 1363. Bois Hall was built in a style of some magnificence in 1605, by Thomas Gardener, Esq., who had obtained it and other considerable estates in the parish by marriage. The lady, however, who brought him wealth,

brought unhappiness with it, and a divorce followed. The stately home which had been just erected was abandoned, and but a small part of it remains. The estate was sold; and having been purchased in the last century by Sir Josiah Child, the founder of the Tilney family, is now the property of the Earl of Mornington. Gladfen Hall was occupied by a branch of the noble family of the Garnons, who assumed the name of their residence, and gave it to Leighs Priory when they founded it in 1230. Blue House, still a mansion with the fine old substantial air of other days about it, was anciently a seat of the knightly Munchensey's, who sprung into importance in the kingdom from the Halsted soil. Earl De Munchensey, a feudatory tenant here, obtained a grant of the rights of his lord, who was banished by Henry I., and founded the family, which long flourished in the land as the Barons of Swainscamp, in Kent. Stansted Hall, however, now a farm house, about a mile and a half south-east of the church, was a point to which the inhabitants turned—as the people were accustomed to do in those days—for direction in general and local affairs, and protection in times of peril. In Domesday Book Stanstead Hall is described as a distinct village. Even up to the last century, when it was united to the parish, it was styled the hamlet of Stansted, was assessed separately to the poor, and had its own constable. In the reign of Henry III. it came into possession of the Bouchiers, and for ages it was the baronial hall of this powerful family—the Earls of Essex—one of whom, in 1336, had license from the crown to “impark his woods in this town;” and five years after he had royal leave to make Stansted Hall a castle. From hence members of this influential family went to take part in the business of high offices of state, to conduct embassies, and make their sword felt and their knightly plume seen, in the battle front at Cressy. Occasionally they endured the misfortunes and forfeitures of political favourites at that time, till in 1541 the estates passed away in marriage; and, having been afterwards sold to Sir Wm. Waldegrave, John Holmstead, gent., and others, are now vested in the Honynood family. A survey taken of this old seat in 1553 affords us a glimpse—the only one we can catch from written records—of the extent and character of the place:—

“It was a large brick building with an area or court in the middle, surrounded with a moat partly filled with water, which was 44 poles in compass. On the south side there was a large gate house, two stories high, embattled, with a turret at each corner. On one side of the gate house was the porter's lodge, and on the other side a house below proper for a prison or such other purposes, as the lord should appoint. In the east side of the court there were five chambers below and six above; and in the west side four chambers below and five above. It is remarkable that those chambers had each two chimnies, and a house of office, which convenience was, it seems, in every apartment. A large chapel formed the north side of the area. The whole stood within a park about four miles in circumference, reaching down to Parsonage bridge, and containing 787 acres. It had 1,000 deer in it, and could keep 500 deer, 40 horses, and 20 milch kine. Several large ponds were in it, and a pool, the fishing of which was valued at £10 a-year. It had also a warren. In this park there were then 3,620 oaks of a hundred years' growth, and 170 ashes, all timber.”

All traces of this castle-hall have disappeared, save the kitchen and its offices. The farmer's boy feeds his pigs on the site of the old baronial banqueting room; and when we look around for the spacious park we find it converted into corn fields.

The MARKET of Halsted is of very ancient date, and from the number of royal grants in respect to it, appears to have been in old times of much greater importance than at present. It originally be-



longed to the king, and from the name of Cheping-hill being applied to the site on which it was held, it seems to have been of Saxon institution. In 1251 Henry III. granted it to Abel De St. Martin, then lord of the manor, to be held on Saturdays, with a yearly fair on the 8th and 9th of October. On his availing himself of this privilege the Earl of Oxford indicted him for setting up a market too near his markets of Castle Hedingham and Earls Colne; but this was compromised by Martin agreeing to pay a sort of yearly compensation of half a mark to his opponent; and the market was then removed from the king's highway "to Cheping hill, at the upper end of the town above the church." In 1330 Edward III. granted Lord Bouchier a market on Tuesdays; a similar grant was made to the Earl of Essex by Edward IV., in 1467, the day for holding it being changed to Fridays; and this was confirmed by Henry VIII., in 1531. In the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign the market was removed to the heart of the town; and in 1705 the market-place was paved at the cost of Mr. S. Fiske and Mr. J. Morley—a piece of parochial patriotism which has not had much effect, as the market, which has again shifted to Tuesday, has never been able to attain much note, with Braintree as a rival on one side and Sudbury on the other.

The GRAMMAR SCHOOL stands in the centre of the town. It has a venerable appearance, but is very incommodious, although £1,000 was laid out in the repair and improving of it in 1836. It was founded by Lady Mary Ramsey in 1594. The care of the school was given to the governors of Christ's Hospital, who were to pay £20 a year as an endowment to the master out of the manor of Colne Engaine. Forty scholars were to be educated from Halsted and Colne Engaine, or if these parishes could not supply the number, the sons of poor men within eight miles were to be eligible. The school-house she erected in her own lifetime, and she provided that the instructions should be limited "to such authors and poets as did write when the Latin tongue was the most pure and of the greatest perfection." This, however, was found irreconcilable with another provision of the foundress, that the pupils should be "the sons of the poorest sort of people of Halsted, such as are not meet or able to pay subsidy or be presented in the subsidy books." The course of education therefore was English reading, writing, and arithmetic, as more useful to this class of scholars, and the number admitted free was about twenty-five. A new scheme has been laid down by the Court of Chancery, under which the number of free scholars is about one hundred; and there is no doubt that if a new house were built by the trustees, the school might be raised to one of the first class. This might be readily done, as a considerable sum of money has been received from property taken by the railway company.

HALSTED COLLEGE—or rather it might be called a chantry on a large scale—was founded by the Bouchiers, and the house was in the heart of the town. Lord Bouchier, chancellor of England, obtained a license for its foundation from Edward III., in 1340. It was to be connected with the church, and to consist of a master and eight priests. He did not, however, complete the undertaking, but it was carried out by the family in 1411, and was endowed with six messuages, 859 acres of land, £5. 13s. 6d. rent in Halsted and the neighbouring parishes, and the advowson of Sible Hedingham. The college was then limited to a master and five priests, who continued to



sing masses in Halsted church for the souls of the Bouchiers, their benefactors, and all the faithful, down to the Reformation, when they were rudely put to flight, and their revenues, which were then valued at £34. 4s. 3d. a-year, were given to Lord Parr, then owner of Stansted Hall.

The mother church of Halsted is a large and noble edifice, with the stamp of venerable antiquity upon it; but for years it lay in a state of wretched dilapidation, with its roof shored up by wooden beams and its altar almost open to the winds—the result of a lingering war between church-rates and the voluntary principle. Happily, however, the sacred edifice was thoroughly restored some years ago; and something of the glorious old spirit to which we owe so many of our ancient temples has blazed out in the parish. On the site of an ancient chapel, at the junction of the road to Braintree and Gosfield, a handsome new church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was erected in 1844, at a cost of £5,000, of which Mrs. Gee, of Earls Colne, contributed £3,000; and the Rev. Duncan Frazer, the minister, has just built a new national school on Tithings Hill, called Lower Trinity School. In the following year the church of St. James—an elegant structure, with a tower and six bells—a house for the minister, and school, were erected at the sole charge of Mrs. Gee, for the outlying district of Greenstead Green, about two miles from the town. In April, 1701, the spire of the mother church was struck by lightning, and set on fire; when, to save the other parts of the building, which were threatened, the supports were cut through and it was thrown down. The tower remained spireless for sixteen years; when Mr. Samuel Fiske, an apothecary of the town, built a new one at his own expense—an act of pious benevolence which an inscription on the south side of the chancel still records; and Prior, the poet, who was at that time often a guest at the vicarage, commemorated the event in a poem, which appears in his collected works. One stanza is as follows:—

“Blest be he called among good men,  
Who to his God this column rais'd;  
Though lightning shake the dome again,  
The man who built it shall be prais'd.”

“There was something prophetic in these lines,” says an old writer, for the spire was again destroyed by lightning, and rebuilt about 1765. Amongst the monuments in the church are two tombs in the south aisle, which possess interest for their antiquity, mutilated as they are, with the inscriptions upon them long since defaced. There is a stone figure on each, representing a Knight Templar and his lady, and they are supposed to have been erected to members of the Bouchier family, several of whom are known to have been buried here 450 years ago.

The church lands consist of 15A., Bellrope Meadow of 3A., a stable, and a rent of 6s. out of Mr. Taylor's estate, altogether producing about £27. There is 8s. 7d. from invested stock, for repairing the tombs of Mrs. Gurney and Moss, which, when not required for that purpose, is given to the poor. The charities consist of 47A. of land and 12 cottages left by William Martin in 1573, for founding a free school, and applied to the poor, and in the same trustees are vested £50. left by — Weaver; a rent of 13s. 4d. by an unknown donor, out of Cowbridge; £55. 11s. 6d. from the sale of the materials of the market cross in 1816; £100, left by Edmund King in 1624; £200. given by Mr. Hasler in 1833; and Powelling Wood, in Gestingthorpe,

of 18A. 2R. 23P. cleared in 1811; the whole of these charities, with £1000. Three-and-a-half per Cents., from savings, produce yearly about £240., which is distributed to the poor in linen, clothing, &c. The other charities are the dividends of £2,666. 13s. 4d. Three per Cents., left by the Rev. John Manistre, in 1827, and distributed in bread; £2. out of the Queen's Head, and £3. out of Clapfield house, left by Abraham Poole, in 1734; £5. 4s. a-year out of Ridgwell farm, left by John Tweed, for four shillings' worth of bread to be distributed every Sunday to 16 aged poor; 40s. a-year left by Sarah Tweed, in 1772, for bread at Christmas; and the dividends of £4,000. Three per Cents., left by Elizabeth Holmes in 1783, £8. to be applied in repairing three monuments in the churchyard; £94. in gifts of £2. each to industrious poor, £2. 2s. for a weekly distribution of threepenny loaves, and the remainder for the expenses of the trust and distribution. A bequest by Sergeant Bendlowe of 6s., and shirts and shifts for the poor, has been lost. The charities have been apportioned by order of the Court of Chancery between the old and the two newly formed parishes.

**THE MAPLESTEDS.—THE CHURCH OF THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS.**—The Maplesteds, Great and Little, lie to the left as we pursue the high road; and the latter parish, as a home of the Knights Hospitallers, and the site of one of the round churches they are reputed to have built, will tempt the architectural antiquarian to turn from his path and make a pilgrimage to the spot. Juliana, wife of Audelin, steward of Henry II., gave the parish to this military order in 1185, then laying the foundation of its wealth and influence in christendom, and forthwith the religious knights erected one of their commanderies or halls here, which, in the two succeeding centuries, the devotion of the people in this and in other counties richly endowed. On the site of the present Hall stood the home of these proud and wealthy warriors; and the fine old staircase and some other parts of the original building were found incorporated with the more modern dwelling in the last century. But all has now passed away—not the smallest relic of the knights, not the least shred of "Le Hospital" can be discovered on the farm. Having obtained possession of the parish, which was confirmed to them by different sovereigns, and clothed with the rights then usually appertaining to important lordships, the knights are presumed to have demolished the old place of worship, and to have erected on its site the little church after the model of that of the Holy Sepulchre, at Jerusalem. This is one of the four round churches in the kingdom—the others being, the Temple, in London, and the edifices at Cambridge and Northampton—all of which are usually considered to have been built by the Knights Hospitallers. This is a probable but not positive conclusion. Conjecture has indulged in various guesses as to the origin of these sacred buildings. Some have even represented them as raised by the Jews for synagogues; but the idea of a community of Jews sufficiently large to require a synagogue dwelling in the rural district of Little Maplested, and leaving no other record behind them, is so absurd as to demolish this theory. Wallen, in his notice of this church, says—

"The present church at Maplested being decidedly built in imitation of the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, must either have been erected by the Hospitallers themselves, or by the Lady Juliana for their use. If by the latter, it would indeed be remarkable that a church of so singular a form, and a copy from so celebrated a model, should not have been specially noticed in the charter of donation. The style of architecture in the

Temple church, London, (erected in the same year as that in which the manor of Maplested was given to the Hospitallers) is the early English; whereas that of the present church at Little Maplested is the decorated, with flowing tracery and other indications of the style prevalent at a later period. From the above-mentioned fact, we conclude that the present church was erected by the Hospitallers, as nothing was more natural than that there should be very early imitations (especially by the Crusaders) of the Church of the resurrection, with whose site the triumphs of the cross was rendered complete, and of which it was itself the splendid memorial."

By whomsoever erected, the church is one of the curious relics of the past; and it was with much satisfaction we learned a few years since that the reviving taste for the preservation of these antiquarian treasures was about to redeem it from the neglected and ruinous state in which it so long lay. The length of the building is thirty feet. The west end is round, forming a circle of about thirty feet in diameter, and has a peristyle of eight clustered columns, which support pointed arches. The east end is semi-circular. "It is remarkable," said an old historian, "that the porch at the east end of the church has three doors in it (opening immediately into the circular part), and there is no entrance into the body but this way." Some Vandal, however, subsequently disfigured this, and ruthlessly transformed it into a modern shaped school, with a hideous chimney at the end—afterwards turned into a vestry room—the entrance to the church being on the southern side. All this has been remedied. A recent writer implies, that as the fine relic was levelled to its foundations in 1857, and re-erected in precisely its ancient form, it was, after all, an imitation and a counterfeit, and the pilgrim could only look upon it as a clever model of the venerable edifice which he had travelled far to see. This was not exactly the case. It was a most faithful and thoroughly conservative restoration, the committee being most anxious to introduce nothing new; but notwithstanding this care, we feel, as we gaze upon the sacred little edifice, that it has lost some of its interest: we no longer behold the veritable handiwork of the Knights Hospitallers. At the dissolution of religious houses, the hospital of the martial brethren shared the general fate. The property was granted away by the king, remaining long in the Wiseman family, but after being held by various owners, it has come into the hands of the small sect of religionists known as Sabbatarians, from holding their Sabbath on the Saturday. In 1705 it was purchased of Edward Bullock, Esq., by Mr. Joseph Davis, a mercer of London, who, by his will, gave a rent-charge of £50 to the chapel of the Sabbatarians in Mill-yard, Goodman's fields, of which he was a member. In 1731 his son died without issue, when the estate was vested in the trustees of this community in lieu of the annuity, and these parties are now lords of the manor, owners of the Hall and Brick farms, patrons of the living, and impropiators of the tithes.

GREAT MAPLESTED, adjacent, is a finely undulated rural parish, with a scattered village, and some good residences, the chief of which is Dines Hall, the seat of John Sperling, Esq., who is lord of the manor. The parish in early ages was held by the lords of Mountfitchet, the De Veres, and others; but in 1575 it was sold to William Deane, Esq. This gentleman, who had been a servant to Lady Anne Maltravers, appears to have leant over and whispered soft things into her ear as he stood behind her chair, till at last his mistress took him from his menial position, bestowed upon him her immense wealth in marriage, and then made him one of the lords of the land. His son demolished

the old mansion, and rebuilt Dines Hall; but his descendant lost it by over confidence in the stability of Cromwell and the commonwealth. "Being," says Holman, "very much addicted to the parliamentary cause, and presuming the structure then raised would stand for ever, he exchanged his fair estate with Colonel Sparrow, for Hide Park, which that colonel had obtained in consideration of his zeal for the prevailing interest. Thus he lost the substance for the shadow"—this property being wrested from him at the Restoration, and given back to the rightful owners. From Colonel Sparrow Dines Hall passed to the Guyons, one of whom nearly rebuilt the Hall; then to the Bullocks, who sold it about 1740 to Henry Sperling, Esq., whose descendants now occupy the mansion, which stands on an eminence a mile south of the church, and with its plantations, grounds, and gardens, forms one of the many pleasant seats which adorn this part of the county. North of the church is Chelmsloo House, a fine old mansion belonging to Richard Myall, Esq., which we cannot look upon without a feeling of interest, as the home for several generations of the ancient Tindal family, the root of which we find planted in Northumberland, in the reign of King John, its branches afterwards spreading out in various directions and mingling with the noble houses of the land. Of one of them, who was Master of Queen's College, Cambridge, Fuller states that—"In the reign of Queen Elizabeth he was proffered by a protestant party in Bohemia to be made king thereof, which he refused, alleging that he would rather be Queen Elizabeth's subject than a foreign prince." The house was built about 1664 by Sir John Tindal, one of the Masters in Chancery, who was murdered two years after in Lincoln's Inn by Mr. Bertram, a gentleman against whom he had given judgment in a cause: the assassin immediately committed suicide. The ancient little church of Great Maplested has a round chancel at the east end; and on the south side, in a chapel belonging to Dines Hall, are two sumptuous monuments to Sir John Dean (1625), and his lady (1633), lavishly decorated by the sculptor with carving, escutcheon, and effigy. The Vicar has 20s. for a sermon on Ash Wednesday, out of Park Fen meadow, left by Lady Mary Saunders in 1668; and the poor have 40s. a year out of Hopoles farm, left by William May, in 1741; 6s. 8d. left them by William Bendlowe out of land at Bocking is not now paid. It is stated that anciently there were alms-houses in the parish; and two tenements, once used as the parish workhouse, are occupied by paupers.

Along the high road from Halsted to Sudbury a line of parishes lie to the right, extending along the eastern verge of the hundred. The first is **PEBMARSH**, within whose rural midst a silk factory belonging to Messrs. Rodick has sprung up, and considerably changed and sharpened the character of the before rustic population. In early times the Bigots, the great Earls of the East Angles, were lords here; and at the end of the street, near the brook, in the hall or castle, the site of which is still called Castle meadow, dwelt the Fitz Ralphs. The walls of this feudal home might not long since be faintly traced; and near by stood the ancient chapel in which they worshipped. The manorial rights have now descended to Lady Puller. At Great House, too, in this parish, resided one of the friends of Oliver Cromwell, and a scourge of the Royalists of the county in the time of the commonwealth—Thomas Cook, Colonel of the Essex militia during

the civil wars, of whom Holman says—"He was a great Oliverian, who made all far and near tremble in the days of his greatness;" but he lived into the times when he could no longer play the tyrant, and died amidst slight and neglect, unpitied by those he had oppressed.\* ALPHAMSTONE, of which Sir Digby Neave is now the lord, stands on the high ground overlooking the vale of the Stour; † and beyond this is LAMARSH, once the property of the Fair Maid of Kent—its soil, which is mostly freehold, is now partly owned by T. P. Parmenter, Esq., who resides at Dowes Hall.‡ Further onward is the village of TWINSTEAD. The Hall was formerly a fine old moated Elizabethan mansion, built by Isaac Wincoll, Esq., in the reign of the maiden queen. The north front still retains the huge bay windows and other peculiarities of that period. Sparrow Hall was a still more antique mansion, in which the well known Essex family of Sparrow dwelt in the reign of Edward I.§ Beyond this lie GREAT and LITTLE HENNY, the high ground of the latter adorned by the Ryes, the seat of N. C. Barnardiston, Esq., which was erected about 40 years since, in place of the old manor house which lay in the bottom, near the river below. The church of Little Henny was suffered to fall to decay many years ago, and the handful of inhabitants now worship at the temple of the twin parish. MIDDLETON is the last parish in this direction—the Place being a good modern mansion, with pleasant grounds about it; but we turn with most interest to the old Hall, the residence, in the time of Edward III., of the rich and ancient family of De Sudbury, one of whom, Simon De Sudbury, was Archbishop of Canterbury in 1375. He was murdered in Wat Tyler's rebellion, and his head, enclosed in an iron grating, is still shown to travellers in St. Gregory's church, Sudbury, in which town he founded St. Gregory's College. The church is very ancient, with a Saxon door-way ornamented with pillars at the side, and the arch wreathed and indented.

We have now reached BALLINGDON and BRUNDEN, forming a suburb of Sudbury, in Suffolk, and connected with it by a wooden bridge over the Stour, the old structure of stone having been swept away by a great flood, in 1519. A large part of the population is employed in silk weaving, which is carried on largely in the town to which it is appendant. Ballingdon, with other estates in the district, was, in the reign of Richard II., given by Simon of Sudbury to the college which he founded at Sudbury, which held it till the Reformation. J. Sperling, Esq. is now the lord; and the manor of Brunden is vested in the Wyndham family. There is no church for the use of the inhabitants. The ancient place of parish worship stood in Brunden, a mile to the left, but it lay a ruin in the last century, and all trace of it has now passed away. There was formerly, too, a chapel in Ballingdon, as we find by a charter of Henry I. that it was appropriated to the kitchen of St. Alban's Abbey; but this is gone; and the place is ecclesiastically connected with the church of St. Gregory, Sudbury, the incumbent

\* The Sunday school of Pebmarsh is endowed with £7. 14s. 4d., from Stock left by the Hon. and Rev. H. G. Bucknell, in 1817.—A cottage and garden are occupied by paupers, and the poor have another cottage and three roods of land, and 20s. out of Twinsted Hall, left by Isaac Wincoll, in 1681.

† The poor have the rents of two cottages, and 2½A. of land given by Thomas Clayton, 1560; and 20s. from Wincoll's charity.

‡ The charities are a rent-charge of £2. given by John Smith; the interest of £15. given by John Clarke and another; and 20s. from Wincoll's charity.

§ The poor have 20s. a year from Wincoll's charity.



receiving a payment of £13. 6s. 8d. from the impropiators of the tithes. Six poor children in Ballingdon are educated from part of the rent of a house in Sudbury, left by John Littell in 1719: the poor have £4. a year from the corporation, as the interest of benefactions left by George Crow and John Hunwick.

Stretching along the windings of the Stour to the left is a line of rural parishes, with their churches and the houses of their scattered hamlets mostly situate upon the high grounds above the valley through which the river flows, and occasionally commanding beautiful views along the border of the neighbouring county. First comes **BORLEY**, of which the lordship in 1364 was given by Edward III. to the convent of Christ Church, Canterbury; but it now belongs to the Countess of Waldegrave. The little church on yonder hill contains some splendid monuments to the memory of this noble Essex family, which was seated in that neighbourhood three or four centuries ago. **FOXEARH**, of which R. Lambert, Esq., is the lord, and Colonel Meyrick owner of much of the soil, lies in the valley beyond. The church was thoroughly restored and beautified about ten years ago, by the Rev. J. Foster, the patron and incumbent.\* Here, in an elevated situation, at a bend of the Stour, is the little parish of **LISTON**, with its pleasant hall, a fine mansion, built in the last century, by the Hon. Wm. Campbell, brother of the Duke of Argyll, who then resided here. It is now the property of R. Lambert, Esq. The manor, belonging to Sir Hyde Parker, was anciently held by the service of making or "paying for, bringing in and placing of five wafers before the king as he sits at dinner upon the day of coronation." **PENTLOW**, further on, is a parish of more pretension, finely situated, with part of its rich lands sloping down to the river opposite Cavendish. The manor belongs to H. C. Mathew, Esq.; and N. Barnardiston, Esq., occupies the hall. Its church, which bears about it the signs of great antiquity, being a mixture of the pure Norman and pointed styles, with a round tower of the Danish character, contains in the chancel a curious old tomb to one of the Feltons. In the chapel to the north, on a fine monument of the Kempes, a family which flourished here and in Finchingfield, are figures of one of them—a judge of the Queen's Bench—his wife and son, with a family of fourteen kneeling children around them: at the foot, on a tablet of black marble, is the following inscription, eulogistic of the judge, and stating he was the sixth son of Wm. Kempe, Esq. :—

"George Kempe, whose life spoke to his virtues' prayse,  
Lies here entomb'd after his ende of dayes.  
Fame tells the world his life and death was such  
As truth's report can never prayse to muche.  
Religion, justice, mercy, bounty, peace,  
With faithful plainesse was his fame's increase.  
In King's Bench courte full fiftye years found just,  
Who reads this truth but needs commend him must.  
Whose Manor-house, Spaynes hall, in Essex knowne,  
Tells from which root this worthy branch was grown.  
Seventy-six years he lived, and children eighte,  
Five sonnes, three daughters, on his age did wayte.  
Monday, on March the three and twentieth day,  
In peace death's hand did take him hence away.  
One thousand six hundred and six of Christ the yeare,  
His soule, as wearie of her mansion heere,  
Made haste to heaven, with Christ for aye to dwell.  
Happie are they that live and die soe well."

\* Thos. Stevens, in 1628, left 40s. for the poor, and 6s. 8d. for the Rector, out of a farm at Little Cornard.

For the relief of three poor men and three poor widows above fifty-five years of age, Susan Gooch in 1715 left 16*l.* 3*s.* 14*d.* of land.

As we have thus been skirting the border of the Hundred by the Stour side, we have passed, adjacent to them, inland, **BULMER** and the **BELCHAMPS**. The main feature in the former parish, of which Earl Howe is the chief lord, is the beautiful seat of the Auberies, so called after Lady Aubery, who built it about 50 years ago. It is now the property of Colonel Meyrick. The mansion itself is a good building, the front adorned with an elegant portico supported by noble fluted pillars. It has a well wooded park and tasteful gardens. The situation is delightful, commanding fine views of Sudbury, and along the borders of Suffolk, over a luxuriant country up to Cambridgeshire; yet it is often found cold and tenantless. No old family has taken root in it; it is now occupied by St. George Burke, Esq. Walter Belchamp is separated from Bulmer by a brook which runs to the Stour. The Hall, once the property of the lordly De Veres and De Mandevilles, is the seat of S. M. Raymond, Esq., having come into his family by purchase from Sir John Wentworth, in 1611; and with its extensive grounds, its fine prospects, its spacious terraces skirted by lofty trees, and if we cross the threshold, the collection of valuable paintings which we shall find within, it ranks amongst the most handsome of the homes of our county gentry. Of Belchamp Otten, S. Sampson, Esq., is lord of the lands which in the reign of Henry II. were held by the ancient family of Otto. Belchamp St. Paul's, a scattered village, with several good residences, which touches at one point upon the Stour opposite Clare, was given to the cathedral of St. Paul's by King Athelstane, and has continued in the dean and chapter ever since, except during the commonwealth, when it was seized and sold for £3,354. 14*s.*; but the lordship was recovered at the Restoration.\* The small village of Ovington, lying between the Belchamps and the river, belonging principally to the Earl of Mornington, possesses some historical interest from its being formerly the residence, and its church the burial place, of the Feltons—the family of the fanatic puritan who stabbed the Duke of Buckingham, the dissolute favourite of Charles I., at Portsmouth, a deed which was celebrated with poetic pæans at the time; and it was a singular coincidence that Colonel Fryer, to whom the Duke was speaking when the fatal blow was struck, belonged to a family who were lords of Guyons, in Steeple Bumpsted, and owners of lands in the neighbouring parish of Ashen. **TILBURY-NEAR-CLARE** adjoins on the south, and the two parishes are now ecclesiastically united. Tilbury Hall, which with the manor is the property of the Earl of Mornington, was formerly the residence of a branch of the De Veres, having been purchased in 1595 by Francis De Vere, a knight who reaped a rich crop of military laurels when the English forces, under the Earl of Leicester, went to the assistance of the States of Holland; and, returning to find a peaceful tomb and a noble monument in Westminster Abbey, it was said of him by a poet of the time:—

“ When Vere sought Death, armed with his sword and shield,  
Death was afraid to meet him in the field;  
But when his weapons he had laid aside,  
Death, like a coward, struck him, and he died.”

\* Otten Belchamp has 8*l.* of church land left by John Price, in 1498; at Belchamp St. Paul's is a National School endowed with 2*l.* 87*d.* of land.



The successor of this warrior took the title of Baron of Tilbury. In those days there was a spacious park around the hall, but this has been partitioned out and given to the plough, and a farmer occupies the remnants of its ancient mansion. Looking down from the hill-tops of Tilbury we see, lying further inland, the villages of STAMBOURNE, and GREAT and LITTLE YELDHAM. Of the first parish, of which the Gibson family, of Saffron Walden, are the lords, it was recorded nearly a hundred years ago that "the Presbyters (Independents) prevail so much in this parish that it is attended with difficulty to get a churchman for the office of churchwarden"—the effect of the establishment of a nonconformist congregation here by the Rev. H. Havens, who was ejected from the rectory in 1662.\* The Yeldhams are two pleasant rural parishes. Great Yeldham abounds in delightful scenery and has some good mansions, which have succeeded the old manor-houses—amongst them Spencer Hall and Spayne Hall, the residence of the Way family. Where the road branches off to Haverhill and Cambridge, the traveller will cast a passing glance at the remains of the venerable "Yeldham Oak," which, with its stem 27 feet in circumference, and its broad-spreading arms, was declared by tradition to have stood there as a way-side mark for at least four centuries.† Adjacent to these parishes, on the north, is TOPPESFIELD,‡ and extending to the road from Castle Hedingham to Sudbury, lie GESTINGTHORPE and WICKHAM ST. PAUL'S,—the latter of which has been held by the dean and chapter of St Paul's since the tenth century, except during the commonwealth, when it was laid hold of by one Cook, of Pebmarsh, who, with a keen sense of the frail nature of his tenure, stripped the estate of all its timber.§ Continuing our journey, in a still nook, out of the line of traffic and the passing stranger, we see the little village of ASHEN on a bold acclivity, bounded by the Stour, with its manor-house, which belongs to the Elwes family, over the border, in the county of Suffolk, but the hall is the property of J. Sperling, Esq. In the neighbouring parish of RIDGEWELL we stand upon the site of one of the "lost cities" of the county. There is reason to believe that we are treading above the ruins of a Roman station, and the remnants of a once considerable town. The military road from Colchester into Cambridgeshire lay through this parish,—traces of it about this neighbourhood were very distinct seventy years ago; and here the Romans appear to have formed a station, with appendant country habitations in Sturmer, Birdbrook—where urns and human bones have been dug up—and the other adjacent parishes. The remains of one of these villas were laid bare here at the

\* For the education of poor children the parish has £15 from Cole's charity at Finchingfield; and the rent of a tenement is distributed in blankets to the poor.

† There is a free school at Great Yeldham, endowed with a small farm at Halsted, left by John Symonds, in 1692; and it has also £250 invested in Stock. There are six almshouses with an acre of land attached. The church land consists of 2A. with two houses on it, and 1½A. of land at Tilbury. The poor have 3½A. of land purchased in 1658. The poor of Little Yeldham have 86s. a-year out of Cook's charity at Otten Belchamp.

‡ The National School is endowed with £10. a-year out of Newhouse Farm, Stambourne, left by Robt. Edwards, in 1730; the poor have £3. a-year from the same source; also 20 shillings a-year out of Oliver's Farm; and 11A. 2R. of land were given, in 1712, by John and William Edwards, for the repair of the church and relief of the poor. Two small rent-charges, left in 1616 and 1730, have been lost.

§ A cottage and 12A. of land have been left for schooling poor children in Gestingthorpe; and in Wickham St. Paul's there are two almshouses and 4A. of land for the poor.

close of the last century. Coins, too, of various Emperors, tiles, and parts of tessellated pavements are frequently brought to light. At a later period we read of Ridgewell being a market town of some importance. In the year 1318 it had the grant of a market to be held on Tuesdays, with a fair on the eve and day of St. Lammas. There used to be a tradition that the old town stood much nearer to Stambourne, and certain it is that foundations of buildings have been traced for a mile in that direction. How it is that the place has been reduced to a humble village, composed of a few houses scattered round a green, history saith not; but in the vaults of some of the old buildings which have been opened have been found beams of timber scathed or calcined by fire, leading to the conclusion that the foot of swift destruction, perhaps in some feudal quarrel or civil war, has passed over the scene, and left only this wreck behind. In this parish, of which the manorial rights have belonged to St. John's College, Cambridge, since 1521, rises a spring which forms the head source of the river Colne. The hamlet of Ridgewell-Norton, lying completely separate and at some distance, between Stambourne and Finchingfield, forms part of Ridgewell, no doubt from its being attached to the ancient lordship, which was once in the Countess of Pembroke, the foundress of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, of whom it was said she was a maid, wife, and widow all in a day, her husband having been killed at a tilting held in honour of his nuptials. The manorial rights have been in St. John's College, Cambridge, since 1521. We have now reached the north-west corner of the Hundred, and the small parish of STURMER bounds our tour in this direction. This, too, appears to have been a place of some note in olden times. "Though," says a writer in the last century, "this parish of Sturmer is now reckoned an obscure place, and small, with but few inhabitants, yet it was formerly very considerable and of great extent, reaching into the counties of Suffolk and Cambridge. Haverhill and Kedington were the hamlets to this parish, though both of these places far exceed it now in the magnificence of their churches and in the number of their inhabitants."

A little inland, in this corner of the Hundred, which here borders on Freshwell, is situate STEEPLE BUMPSTED, the site of some stronghold which has crumbled into dust, or the scene of historical struggles the memory of which has vanished from the page of record, as seems to be indicated by the lines of entrenchments not long since to be traced here, and the huge stones and masses of human bones which the inquisitive spade has brought up from the mouldering foundation and the martial grave. Bowers Hall, a good modern house with its park about it, now stands on the site of an ancient building, which was for generations the seat of the family of Bendish; one of whom, Sir Thomas, we have already seen took an active part in the county in the troubles of King Charles' time; and though he remained sternly faithful to the royal cause, such was the confidence in his honour and integrity, that he was sent by the Republicans as ambassador to Turkey, with the sanction and commission of the fugitive king, which he made a point of obtaining. The chief mansion of the parish, however, is Moynes park, the seat of G. Gent, Esq. The estate took its name from a family named Le Moigne; and it was purchased in September, 1494, by the widow of William Gent, belonging to a family which had been settled at Wimbish as early as 1328. For 366 years the Gents have dwelt at Moynes,

taking part as magistrates, and twice as sheriffs, in the public business of the county ; and in 1588, Thomas Gent, who is described as " the glory and ornament of his family," was made one of the barons of the exchequer by Queen Elizabeth. He was held in high esteem for his religion, learning, and integrity, which were celebrated by one of the poets of his day ; and he stood in such high favour with Queen Elizabeth, that in spite of the statute, she granted him a license to act as one of the judges of the assize in his own county of Essex. He it was who built the stately Elizabethan front to the ancient mansion of Moynes. The large bay windows rise to the full height of the building, in the shape of turrets ; and with the antique gables and clustered chimnies, the house is a fine specimen of the ornamented style of that period. The park abounds in fine old timber and beautiful prospects ; and the noble rooms of the mansion contain a splendid collection of family portraits and other valuable paintings.

The parish school is endowed with £100. Three per Cents. Reduced ; three houses long held by the parish are occupied by poor ; the town land comprises 2A. 1R. 6P., the proceeds of which are distributed in calico ; 5A. of church land, given in 1468, have been lost.

Of BIRDBROOK, which adjoins Steeple Bumpsted to the east, it was said in the last century—" In the passage from Toppesfield to this place, you are presented for upwards of half a mile with one of the finest landscapes in the county ; but the pleasure received from this delightful prospect is in some measure damped upon your approach to the village, which has all the appearance of wretchedness and poverty ; and indeed it is a matter of astonishment that a place so very inviting from its situation should be without one good house in it." This is a libel upon the Birdbrook of the present day. It has several neat mansions and good farm-houses ; and Baythorne park, the property of Mr. King Viall, standing on the acclivity above the Stour, with its park-like pastures and its fine old trees, is sufficient in itself to redeem the parish from the reproach of the surly traveller. The little church, which was thoroughly restored at the close of the last century, has a handsome font ; and we are told that Mary Blewitt, who was laid within its yard in 1681, had made a complete *battue* of the lords of the creation : she had had nine husbands, all in regular and lawful succession, and when she was gathered to the connubial batch the clergyman took for the text of her funeral sermon—" Last of all the woman died also."

The parish is entitled to a share of Cole's charity at Finchingfield, which is applied to the school.

## Dengie Hundred.

This hundred contains the following twenty-one parishes, irrespective of the borough of Maldon, which will be treated of separately:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.		
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.	
Woodham Walt.	Villages in a wood, and Walter and Mortimer, owners .....	2421	585	£778	£506	0	0
Woodham Mort.		1380	320	1834	349	10	0
Hazeleigh .....	The Saxon <i>hæash</i> , nut-tree, and <i>ley</i> , pasture—nut-tree pasture .....	1630	148	1297	287	5	0
Purleigh .....	<i>Pear</i> , and <i>ley</i> —pear-pasture ..	5578	1184	6412	1700	0	0
Cold Norton .....	Its northern situation .....	1651	213	1792	385	0	0
Stow Maries ...	<i>Marey's</i> , an old family, and <i>stow</i> , a place— <i>Marey's</i> place ..	2444	307	2677	660	0	0
North Fam-bridge .....	The <i>fam</i> , or foaming water, and the ancient bridge .....	1248	150	1511	340	0	0
Latchingdon ...	The Saxon word <i>Læcing</i> , and <i>dun</i> , a hill.....	3673	411	£778	{ 910 0 0 117 0 0 }		
Snoreham .....		399	155				
Mundon .....	<i>Mund</i> , a defence, and <i>dun</i> , a hill—a defended hill .....	4295	287	3400	616	7	10
Steeple .....	The first church with a steeple ...	3434	547	3667	369	19	5
Mayland .....	<i>Mæde</i> , pasture—pasture land...	2030	203	2762	411	0	0
Althorne .....	A remarkable old thorn.....	2250	430	2785	455	2	0
Cricksea .....	A creek near the sea .....	985	167	1326	250	16	0
Burnham .....	<i>Burn</i> , a stream, and <i>ham</i> , a village—the village by the stream .....	5523	1807	9648			*755 13 0
Southminster.....	The south-church .....	7701	1482	10000	1414	0	0
Asheldham.....	The name of a person, and <i>ham</i> , a habitation .....	2398	190	2075	420	0	0
Dengie .....	Danes' island .....	3319	312	3000	725	0	0
Tillingham.....	Tilled lands and a habitation.....	7235	1048	6069	799	17	0
St. Lawrence ...	Dedication of the church to St. Lawrence .....	2820	222	3110	552	0	0
Bradwell.....	Broad-wall—the sea wall .....	4704	1143	7660	1373	0	0

\* This includes £154. 13s. impropriate tithes, which come to the vicar.

This Hundred has been the scene of some important events in the history of the nation, but in ages so remote that there is no written record to identify them with the locality; and in traversing the district we find few of the letters of the antiquarian alphabet—the huge foundation, the earth-work, and the architectural ruin—by the aid of which their memorials may be traced out and read. We are left to dim conjecture and deduction from fragmentary evidence and surrounding circumstances. These inform us that here were sown the first seeds of christianity which shot forth and took root in the county. On yonder shores, beyond Bradwell, stood the city of Ithanchester, in which Cedde, the first bishop of the diocese, in 658, baptised many in the new faith, built a church, and endowed priests and deacons to minister in it. In a later age the Danes took possession of the Hundred and long made it their head quarters or camp along the coast, from which they sent forth their expeditions and plundering parties into other parts of the county. It was in a manner their recognized home in their earlier struggles for the mastership of the land, as its present name implies, Dengie being derived from Danes-ig, "the Danes' island." What a happy change a thousand years have wrought in the scene. Flocks graze undisturbed on the rich marshes beyond which the long narrow war vessels were moored. The carol of the ploughman and the tinkle of the sheep-bell

are heard at twilight, instead of the martial signal. The fierce chieftain has subsided into the skilful farmer. The steel that glitters in the sun is that of the sickle or the scythe; and instead of the wild warrior returning to his den with his prey, the rich heavy wheats of Dengie are sent forth to help feed and fatten other parts of the kingdom. In Blount's Ancient Tenures there is the following rhyming charter of a grant of this Hundred:—

“ Iche Edward Konyng,  
Have given of my forest the keping,  
Of the hundred of Cholmer and Dancing,  
To Randolph Peperking, and to his kindling;  
With heort and hynd, doe and bock,  
Hare and fox, cat and brock,  
Wild fowell with his flock,  
Patridge, fessent hen, and fessent cock,  
With green and wyld stob and stokk,  
To kepen and to yemen by all her might  
Both by day and by night;  
And hounds for to holde,  
Gode and swift and bolde,  
Four greyhounds and six braches,  
For hare and fox and wild cats;  
And hereof iche made him my bock,  
Witness the Bishop Woolston,  
And bock yeleded many one,  
And Sweyn of Essex our brother,  
And to ken him many other,  
And our stiward Howelyn,  
That bysought me for him.”

This has been accepted by some historians as genuine, but it bears in its language evidence of being a forgery of the fourteenth century; and beyond this, it is exceedingly improbable that Ralph Peverell—the “Randolph Peperking” here referred to—upon whom, as we have already seen, the Conqueror quartered his cast-off mistress, was in England, and received a grant from a Saxon king before the Norman accession.

The WOODHAMS are the first parishes we enter in passing from Chelmsford Hundred; and their finely undulated lands give the traveller a favourable idea of the district he is about to traverse. In Woodham Walter, as already recorded, was the seat of the noble family of the Fitzwalters, and about a mile from the church are some faint fragments of the foundations of the castle or fortified manor-house, where the beautiful Boleyn was sometimes a visitor. Near by is a building dignified with the name of The Fort, in which tradition says Queen Elizabeth at one period sought refuge from the dark enmity that hovered around her earlier years. This noble mansion, of which a drawing has been preserved in the British Museum, was first deserted by the Fitzwalters for New Hall, Boreham, and the estate having afterwards passed to the Fytches of Danbury Place, the whole building was mercilessly demolished. The Duke of St. Alban's is now lord of the manor. The church was built in 1562, by the Earl of Sussex, under a license from Queen Elizabeth, the old church being little better than a ruin. Woodham Mortimer, which came to Ralph Peverell at the conquest, was given by Henry II. to Robert de Mortimer, from whom it takes its second name. The Place, the pleasant residence of J. O. Parker, Esq., is now the chief mansion of the parish; but the Hall, hard by the little church, and in the occupation of a

farmer, is a fine old Elizabethan mansion, which appears to have stood through troublesome days. In making alterations in the house some years ago the workmen came upon a trap-door, opening into a secret place of concealment, in which was found a box containing jewels, ladies' gloves, and a few other similar articles—the sad mementoes of some one who, smitten by conscience or pursued by political enmity, in the times when to differ from the ruling powers was death, had first sought shelter here, and then fled in haste, leaving these relics, perhaps memorials of some loved one, in the lurking-place which was thought no longer secure. The Rev. J. T. Round is lord of Woodham Mortimer manor. The hall was purchased in 1755, by Mr. William Alexander, a wine merchant of London, who left it to the Wine Coopers' Company; and by the road side, opposite the house, that body have raised a handsome obelisk in grateful memory of the benefactor to their guild. The poor have the dividends of £125. left by Viscountess Falkland, and of £200. left by Susannah Meard, in 1786, for distribution in bread.

Passing through the little parish of HAZELEIGH—Great and Little Hazeleigh are mentioned in old records—we reach PURLEIGH, which extends about nine miles, and has clusters of houses at How Green, Round Bush, Callow Green, and Cock Lark. Miss Harvey Bonnell is lady of the manor of Purleigh Hall, which belonged, at Domesday Survey, to the great Earl of Boulogne; J. J. Tufnell, Esq., is lord of Barons; and Freme and Sacklett, which were part of the endowment of Wikes Nunnery, are the property of the Charter-House. From the tower of the large and handsome parish church, which stands on one of the highest hill-tops of the Hundred, vast and beautiful views are obtained. As the eye sweeps round the scene glimpses are caught of twelve or thirteen churches, the neighbouring town of Maldon, the bay of the Blackwater below, with the hills of Kent in cloudy dimness beyond.—There is a free school for the poor, endowed from a bequest of the Rev. Dr. Horamonden, with £30 a-year, and his widow, in carrying out this, gave 20s. a-year for repairing the chancel windows. The clerk has £5. a-year, the rent of 3A. of church land; and the poor have £3. 18s. from £100. left by Vicountess Falkland for distribution in bread.

As we leave Purleigh, MUNDON lies on the left towards Maldon, standing at the head of a creek, and believed, from its name, to have been in Saxon times the site of a fortification. T. B. Western, Esq., is now the lord.\* To the south is COLD NORTON, the manor and most of the lands belonging to the Charter-House, being part of the original endowment of the founders of that institution; the elegant little church was built a few years ago, at the sole charge of the Rev. W. Holland, the rector.† Adjacent to it is the pleasant village of STOW MARKE, the land of the parish being all freehold. Further on, in the south-west corner of the Hundred, we reach NORTH FAMBRIDGE, of which William Gale, Esq., the owner of the Hall, is lord. The bridge, which it appears spanned the Crouch at this part, and gave name to the parish, disappeared long ago; and the river at full tide being broad and strong.

\* Mundon is entitled to send three or four boys to Dr. Plume's Free-school at Maldon.

† The only charity is a cottage, garden, and 1A. 2P. of land, given to the poor by an unknown donor.



there is a well-known ferry here, with which we find a romantic and daring love adventure connected. An old historian thus records it—

“The Earl of Warwick, going from Leighs to Rochford Hall, was attended by Capt. Cammoch, who courted his daughter. He carried her off upon a horse, and came to Fambridge ferry, when the boat was on the other side, and the tide violent; they found themselves pursued, and had no shift but to swim over; the captain advised her not to venture, but she said she would live and die with him, and took the water. When they were half over, the earl’s servant came to the water side, and his horse neighed, upon which the horse that carried the lovers turned round, and with much difficulty was brought to keep his course. They rode to Maldon, were wedded and bedded; and the earl said, seeing she had ventured her life for him, God bless them.”

Salmon adds that in his time a lady, fond of the hounds, had been seen to swim her horse over the ferry in the ardour of the chase, “which,” says he, “proves Diana equal to Venus.”

LATCHINGDON, with its hamlet of Lawling, and SNOREHAM, which is united to it for the purposes of the poor and the highways, lie a little inland. The pleasant little village is in three parishes, the principal inn, the Lion, being in Snoreham; and the police station, where the petty sessions for the hundred are held, is in Purleigh. Lord Rayleigh is lord of Snoreham, as well as of the King’s, or chief manor of Latchingdon; and C. H. Pully, Esq., is the lord of Lawling Hall—an estate which was given in 993 by the gallant old Saxon warrior, Brythnott, who was killed in the battle with the Danes before Maldon, to the Convent of the Holy Trinity at Canterbury. For all practical purposes Latchingdon and Snoreham are united, though the benefices are still separate, and for many years they had only half a church between them. Snoreham place of parish worship, which stood near the hall, was suffered to fall into ruin centuries ago, and for a long time the only sign of its ecclesiastical independence was a sermon preached once a year under a tree near the spot where the pulpit and the altar formerly stood. The tower of Latchingdon church fell down more than forty years ago; the bricks were applied to baser uses, and the wounded stump was covered with an ugly bandage of weather boarding. A handsome new church, in the decorated style, was, however, erected near by the village in 1857. There are 6A. 27P. of church land; and the poor have £2 a year out of land at Althorne, left by Moses Fisher in 1666.

ALTHORNE lies partly inland, and Ash Cottage, the seat of T. D. F. Tatham, Esq., is a pleasant mansion.\* Further on are MAYLAND, the hall manor belonging to St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, and ASHELDHAM, of which Lord Petre and the hospital just named are the lords;† while upon the verge of the Hundred, by the river side, lies CRICKSEA: the manor belongs to Sir Henry Mildmay. The rectory is consolidated with that of Althorne. The poor have 18s. 11½d. from Aylett’s charity, and a rent of £1. out of Mustard’s, by an unknown donor.

STEEPLE.—STANS\_GATE PRIORY.—Away to the left, by the verge of the Blackwater, on the northern side of the Hundred, we reach STEEPLE-with-STANS\_GATE, a long village on a slope overlooking the marshes and the estuary. It includes the hamlet of Stansgate and the island of Ramsey, the latter lying nearly three miles to the north-east of the

\* The poor of Althorne have £1. 18s. 6½d. a-year from William Aylett’s charity, noticed elsewhere.

† There are 4A. of church land in Mayland given by William Aylett; and the poor have £1. 19s. 6½d. from his charity.—Asheldham has £1. 3s. 6½d. from the same charity.



village. The manor of Steeple Hall belongs to St. Bartholomew's Hospital; and J. J. Tufnell, Esq., is lord of Steeple Grange, which formerly belonged to the Ferrars family. Stansgate, which is situate near the water, and appears to have taken its name from a stone-gate or landing-place, forms a little peninsula, and was the site of the only monastery planted in this water-side region. It had its own church as early as 1110, but this has long since disappeared; and in 1175 a priory for Cluniac monks was found here as a cell to that of Lewes. It appears to have gone on, as was the wont of these holy brotherhoods, gathering to itself lands and tithes and tenements, till it is shown by an inquest taken at Chelmsford, on its suppression in 1525, that it had fifty messuages, a thousand acres of arable, six hundred of pasture, two hundred of meadow, one hundred of wood land, and twenty shillings rent. Woolsey obtained possession of the property, but it passed back to the crown on his fall, and was granted to Lord Rich. The smock-frock of the husbandman has succeeded the habit of the monk; the straw hat takes the place of the cowl; and if we look around for the priory we find the wall of a barn which appears to have formed part of the church, the sacred edifice having succumbed to the fate very common in the county, by which the convent altar is turned into a threshing floor. The poor have £2. 1s. from Aylett's charity.

**BRADWELL.—THE LOST CITY OF ITHANCESTER.**—Passing ST. LAWRENCE NEWLAND, whose lands in ancient times chiefly belonged to monastic institutions, but are now all freehold,\* we approach a spot perhaps the most interesting and sacred in the Hundred—interesting, because in the earliest ages of our history, long before the Saxon appeared as a master in England, or the foot of the Dane had laid claim to the soil hereabout and left his name upon it, military battlements rose here, and the glitter of the arms of the Roman soldiers was seen upon the sea-walls—sacred, because in what are now the sands of Bradwell the seeds of Christianity were sown, in the far-back time when Essex boasted its own king, and, taking root and bearing fruit, spread the sheltering branches of the holy tree over all this part of the county. At the north-east point or promontory of the Hundred, bounded on one side by the German Ocean, and on another by the waters of Blackwater Bay, is the large parish of Bradwell-Juxta Mare, as it is called—that is, Bradwell-near-the-Sea—with its large village, or rather two villages, the Street and the Water-side. Bradwell Hall is a good mansion, remodelled and much improved by modern taste; its manor, with Pilton Fee, belongs to Sion College, having been given to the city of Bristol for this and other benevolent purposes by Dr. Thomas White, in 1624. There is little about the parish or place to mark its antiquity; but we are assured by the best historic testimony that near this spot stood the martial Othona of the Romans, and the Ithancester of the Saxon heptarchy. Camden, in speaking of this part of the county, says—

“Higher up than Tillingham, towards the northern shore, stood once a flourishing city, called by our ancestors Ithancester. For thus Bede, and Ralph Niger, monk of Coggeshall, tell us. Cedda built churches in several places, ordaining priests and deacons to assist him in the word of faith and ministry of baptism, especially in the city, which in the language of the Saxons is called Ithancestir, which stood upon the bank of the river Pant, that runs near Maldon, in the province of Dengy, but that city hath since been swallowed up in the river Pant. I cannot exactly point out the place, but that the river Freshwell was heretofore called Pant I am pretty confident, because one of its

\* The poor have £1. 8s. 8½d. from Aylett's Charity.

springs still keeps the name of Pant's Well; and the monk of Coggeshall, speaking of it, uses the same appellation. Some think this Ithancester to have been seated in the utmost point of Dengie Hundred, where stands at present St. Peter's-on-the-Wall. I am inclined to believe that this Ithancester was the same as Othona, the station of the band of the Fortenses, with their provost, in the declension of the Roman empire, who were placed here, under the count of the Saxon shore, to secure the coast against the pirating Saxons. For Othona might very easily pass into Ithana; and the situation in a creek, at the mouth of several rivers, was very convenient for such a design."

The St. Peter's-on-the-Wall here referred to—or as it was anciently described, *Capella de la Val*—was a chapel of ease standing on the sea wall, and in 1442 it had a chancel, nave, and tower, with two bells. A small remnant of it, used as a barn, still exists; but this is all of olden days the pilgrim will find to visit. A huge ruin of a thick wall, near which many Roman coins had been found, is mentioned by Holland since Camden's time, but this is gone. The ravenous water, which sweeps round this point with resistless force, has swallowed all. As we stand upon the sea bank, which now says to the waves "thou shalt go no further," dreamy imagination calls up the scenes of the past. Out to seaward we behold the battlements of the imperial warriors changing into peaceful dwellings, tapering up into crosses on church tops, extending out into market-places and streets. The stream of life flows through all the avenues and arteries of the busy town. We turn, and it is gone. The solid city has vanished like the fantastic shapes we trace in the evening cloud. We look to where it stood and see a waste of water and treacherous sand, and find that what we mistook for the hum of the busy multitude is the murmur of the triumphing tide rolling over its site.

There is a free school in the parish founded by Dr. Buckridge, and endowed with the rent of an estate at Mile-end, yielding about £100 a year. The poor have £4. 0s. 10d. from Aylett's charity, for distribution in blankets.

Turning southward, TILLINGHAM is the next parish. It has a tract of rich marsh land along the coast; a good village two miles inland; and some fine old farm houses scattered over its lands. On the marshes are two decoys—not uncommon on this coast—where considerable numbers of ducks, widgeon, and teal are annually caught. The shore of the ocean, bounding the eastern side of the parish, is much frequented during the winter months with the above wild fowl, and also black and grey geese, swans, and shelldrakes; and the booming of the bittern is occasionally heard. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's are lords of the manor, which they have held ever since the days of the founding of that cathedral by Ethelbert, king of Kent. The Dean of Winchester, Dr. William Clarke, having a lease of the hall and the demesne lands and great tithes of the marshes of Hall Wick, Middle Wick, and Weather Wick, in 1679, left the yearly profits for the augmentation of ten poor livings, amongst which are those of Dedham and Hatfield Broad Oak. The church was nearly rebuilt in 1706 by a pound rate on the inhabitants.\* As we pass along by the coast, DENEIN, which gives name to the Hundred, but is one of its smallest villages, though probably it was one of the first inhabited

\* There are almshouses for four unmarried people, founded in accordance with the will of G. Baker, in 1652, and endowed with £20. a year out of Samson's farm. The poor have from the same donor £10. a year for distribution in beef, out of Midlins; also £8. 7s. 10½d. from Aylett's charity; £22. from Symson's charity: £1. out of Redding's farm, left by James Cockett, in 1738. Two other charities have been lost.

spots, lies about two miles inland, upon the side of a small creek. Lord Petre is lord of Dengie Hall. The neat Gothic church was thoroughly restored and beautified in 1850.\*

**SOUTHMINSTER** runs nearly parallel, and its main land is bordered on one side by a fine expanse of marsh, beyond which is the Ray Sand and the open sea. The village, some distance inland, is one of the most considerable of the district, and the spirit of improvement has been busy with it—the handsome private residences, good shops, and comfortable inns which we now find here contrasting strangely with the description given of it a century ago. The Bishops of London had the manor of Southminster in the Saxon era. King Canute seized it, but the bishop recovered possession of it after the Conquest, and it remained in that see till Ridley, the martyr, resigned it to Edward VI. in 1550. Being granted away by the crown, it was bought in 1585 by the founder of the Charterhouse, who settled it upon that foundation, and there it continues, together with the ownership of a great part of the soil of the parish. Ray, which includes a good meadow and marsh, appears to have belonged to St. Osyth's Priory, and was part of the property assigned by Henry VIII. to support and console Anne of Cleves, when he deserted her. The church is a large and handsome building of the cruciform shape, with a fine tower. The nave bears about it evidence of great antiquity, but the chancel is little more than a century old; and in the earlier days of its history it is said to have enjoyed the distinction of being the noblest church in the county south of Colchester—whence its name, the South Minster, by which description it was known in the land. On a building at the Hall, now used as a barn, is a Latin inscription, which in English is as follows:—"In the year of the incarnation, 1573, this chapel was built in memory of the blessed Virgin Mary." This date carries us to the reign of Elizabeth, when the Reformation was in full work—and it seems probable that the opening of a chapel so near a stately church was attributable to some of the religious conflicts of that time. The charities consist of 14A. 1R. 37P. of land in Bartins Moor, left by William Aylett in 1593, for the poor of this and ten neighbouring parishes—the share of Southminster being £5. 6s. 11d.; a rent-charge of £4, granted by the Charterhouse in 1628; and a rent-charge of £8, out of Caidge, by an unknown donor, is applied to the National School. Peter Hackblock, a surgeon of the parish, by his will, dated in 1835, made charges on his estate, giving to every godly widow and widower belonging to and residing in this parish, and who should be a member of the true high established church and orthodox religion, and who should most constantly attend the service in the said parish church on Sundays, a quartern loaf of good wheaten bread, to be delivered on the days after-mentioned, immediately after divine service therein, viz.:—on Christmas day, on his birth day, the 17th of January, Easter day, and Whit-Sunday in every year, for ever; and two bushels of coals to each of the said poor widows who should attend the most constantly at the evening service, lectures, prayers, and sermons in the church on the same days and times; and to every poor godly widow who should constantly take the sacrament in Southminster church on the days aforesaid. He also founded a Sunday evening lecture in the church, and gave bequests to the national schools. The will was disputed, and was long a subject of litigation.

\* The poor have four cottages, and 8A. of land, left by Thomas Sympson, in 1684, charged with £2. to Tillingham; and £1. 16s. from Aylett's charity.

**BURNHAM.—THE OYSTER FISHERY.**—Burnham is a handsome little town, with good private residences, large shops and inns ; its quay and jetty, with the neat little village of OSTEND, situate near the church, being a mile to the north. Standing upon a broad part of the Crouch, at about six miles from the point at which that river debouches into the sea, and with water enough for a 90-gun ship close by, this spot was no doubt one of the earliest settlements of the district. We find, however, no mention of it till the Conquest, when the manor of Burnham was possessed by Ralph Baynard. In 1285 it was in the Fitzwalters, and is now the property of the representative of that ancient house, Sir Henry Mildmay, who has the royalty of the river for eighteen miles in length, and a mile over, as also the manors of East Wick and West Wick, which were given by the Lady Juga to the Priory of Dunmow. The manor of Warners, which extends with Burnham Marsh eastward to the ocean, is the property of the Earl of Mornington. A charter for a market here on Tuesdays was obtained by Lord Fitzwalter, in 1348, and also for a fair of four days, commencing on the 19th of September. The market has long been discontinued, but pedlary fairs are held on the 25th of April and the 20th and 21st of September. Many of the inhabitants are engaged in fishing and other maritime pursuits ; but the trade of the town very much depends upon the oysters of the Crouch and its creeks, which are justly reckoned amongst the finest in the kingdom. The shore is a profitable mine, which is leased from Sir Henry Mildmay, and worked by a local company, by whom the principal part of the oyster breeding and business is carried on. This company consists of five of the principal merchants of the place—Messrs. J. G. Auger, John Hawkins, L. Sweeting, T. Rogers, and William Auger. Many of the oysters are exported to Ostend, Belgium, Dunkirk, and other places ; and from hence the oyster companies on the coast of Kent are largely supplied with the young brood. Burnham, too, has a fine little fleet of coasting vessels, which occasionally make foreign voyages ; and it has its custom-house and its coast-guard station.

The church, a mile north of the town, is a Gothic structure of flint and stone ; and its tower, formerly the loftiest in the district, was a good sea-mark, but being blown down it was not rebuilt to the same height.

The poor's lands, as they are called, comprise about 58 acres, several houses, a wharf and quay, and an oyster laying in the river, given principally by Lord Fitzwalter in 1681, but partly by unknown donors ; and the proceeds are applied to the salaries of the master and mistress of the National schools, the repair and sustainment of the building, and in occasional distributions of blankets and coals to the poor, who have also £4. 17s. 1½d. from Aylett's charity.

## Becontree Hundred.

This Hundred, the last in the county, Londonward, contains the following nine parishes. From the smallness of its extent it has sometimes been called a Half-Hundred, but is described as a Hundred in Domesday Book :—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Barking .....	The Saxon words Birch, tree, and meadow.....	12741	9968	44120		820 0 0
Dagenham .....	The derivation of <i>Dagen</i> is unknown; <i>ham</i> is a habitation or town .....	6608	2494	14321		851 1 0
East Ham .....	The East town.....	2495	1550	11861	320 0 0	1000 0 0
West Ham.....	The West town .....	5390	18817	64550	1150 9 3*	
Leyton .....	The river Lea and <i>den</i> , a village—the village by the Lea .....	2241	2901	17834	270 0 0	400 0 0
Little Ilford ...	The bad ford before the bridge was erected .....	763	187	2878	200 14 8	
Wanstead .....	The Saxon words <i>wan</i> , white, and <i>stede</i> , a place—the white place ..	2004	2207	8742	1640 0 0	
Walthamstow..	A forest village at the <i>stow</i> or place.....	4436	4959	25377	284 8 10	700 17 9
Woodford .....	A ford in the forest, now Woodford bridge .....	2148	2774	12993	670 0 0	

\* The tithes are impropriated: the value of the vicarage is £1,026.

† This is the value of the rectory.

This, for its extent, is the most thickly-populated Hundred in the whole county. Though comprising only nine parishes, the census shows that its inhabitants exceed in number those of any other Hundred in the county with the exception of Hinxford, being greater than in the 30 parishes of Chelmsford, nearly four times the 16 of Witham, and almost three times the 25 of Rochford Hundred. The Hundred occupies the south-west corner of the county, between Havering Liberty, Ongar, and Waltham Hundreds, and the Lea, and is bounded on the south by the Thames. Its name is derived from an important beacon—one of the telegraph posts of ancient times—which stood upon the hill now occupied by a mill, at Woodford; and the district appears to have long been, as now, a favourite suburban retreat of the London merchants, as a writer nearly a hundred years ago says—"It abounds with pleasant villas and delightful seats, to which the rich and industrious citizens retire from their usual thick air and hurry."

WEST HAM, from its traffic, trade, and importance, the capital of the Hundred, is the most thickly peopled parish in Essex, more than doubling the whole population of some of the smaller Hundreds in the county. It has, in fact, become a busy suburb of the metropolis, which has rubbed off its once rural character. Its little hamlets have grown into large towns. Fields over which the plough passed a quarter of a century ago are covered with workshops and teeming factories. On its river bank have risen up the largest ship-building works in the world. Its quiet creek and marsh land have been converted into mighty docks, furnishing a haven and a home for commerce from all countries of the earth. Its pleasant spots, on the edge of business, but

just beyond reach of the sound of the hammer and wheel, and the wearying hum of the London hive, are studded over with handsome residences. Its population, it is estimated, has risen, since the last census, from nineteen thousand to thirty or forty thousand. Thus, teeming with numbers and alive with industry and growing wealth, this district, the mustering ground, as we have already seen, of the discontented in old times, and in which the serfs of the county wrung a grant of freedom from Richard II., bears great weight—an almost preponderating influence—in the parliamentary and political struggles of the southern division.

In the earliest ages of which we have any record West Ham belonged to two Saxon freemen, Alestan and Leured; but at the time of the survey it had passed to the Gernon or Montfitchett family, who gave two of the manors to the Abbey which they founded, and the others were soon after absorbed by the monks. The place had a market granted to it by a charter in 1253, but it never appears to have been of a very important character, and for ages it has been discontinued. After the dissolution of the Abbey, the manors came into the hands of different parties. That of West Ham, in which the custom of gavelkind prevails—the youngest son inheriting copyhold estates—was for a long time retained by the crown, but the fee was sold in 1805, and is now owned by E. Humphries, Esq. Of West Ham Burnels and Plaiz, both so called from ancient owners, Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart., is the lord.

STRATFORD ABBEY—or the Abbey of Stratford Langthorne, as it is called in old records—stood in the marshes, on a branch of the Lea, on the site now partly occupied by the silk print-works of J. Tucker, Esq., and busy workmen are heard on the spot which for 500 years was dedicated to religious quiet, and sanctified by the chant of the old monks. The house was founded about the year 1134 by William De Montfitchett, for brethren of the Cistercian order, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary and All Saints. It was richly endowed by the founder, who gave it all his lordship here, and also by other benefactors. In the days of its splendour it possessed 1,500 acres of land in this parish, with the manors of West Ham, Wood Grange, East-West-Ham, and Plaiz; thirteen manors in other parts of the county; lands in various parishes; the advowson of Little Ilford, the rectory of East Ham, the advowsons of the vicarages of West Ham, Great Burstead, Leyton, and Great Mapleston; a manor and lands in Kent; 472 acres in a Wiltshire forest; a market and two fairs at Billericay; pasture for 800 sheep and other rights in Windsor forest; besides some houses in Clement's Lane, London, one of which appears to have been used as the abbot's town house when he attended parliament, to which he was summoned in 1307. The Abbey grounds and gardens occupied sixteen acres, enclosed by a moat; but destitute as the locality then was of the scientific improvements of the present day—of tumbling bays, straightened channels, and embankments, the holy brotherhood often found their walks overflowed, and their cloisters invaded by the neighbouring waters. On one occasion they were actually routed by the floods, and compelled to fly to their property at Billericay. Leland thus relates the circumstance—

“This house, first sett amonge the lowe marches, was after with sore fludes defacyd, and removed to a cello or graunge longinge to it caullyd Borgestide, in Essex, a mile from Billirica. These monks remained in Borgestide untill entrete was made that they



might have sum helpe otharwyse. Then one of Richards Kings of England took the ground and abbey of Strataferde into his protection, and rededicated it, brought the foresayd monks agayne to Strateforde, where among the marches they re-inhabytid."

From this time the Abbey appears to have gone on prosperously, and it took a high position amongst the religious houses of the land. Nobles, as was the custom of the time, often resorted to it. In 1385 the Earl of Hereford and Essex, high constable of England, was buried within its precincts; the Countess of Salisbury, whom the ruthless Henry VIII. beheaded in her old age, dwelt within its walls; and at the dissolution its annual revenue amounted to £625.3s. 1½d. Its possessions were granted to Sir Peter Mewtes, who had been French secretary at court, and the property is now divided amongst a considerable body known as the Abbey landowners, who retain the peculiar rights and responsibilities of the ancient holders. The building itself, like many of these religious edifices, was abandoned to decay when the monks had been expelled from the chapel and cloister; and fifty years ago a brick gateway and an ornamental arch were all that had survived the sap of three centuries. These have now disappeared from the scene. Even the foundations have been dug up, in the course of which operation a small onyx seal was brought to light, bearing a griffin set in silver, and the legend, "Nuncio vobis gaudium et salutem," supposed to be the seal of one of the abbots. Save here and there, where a few have been relaid in the walls of some neighbouring building, it would be difficult for the most inquisitive antiquarian to discover a stone of the ancient Abbey of Stratford Langthorne.

Bow-BRIDGE, over the Lea, which separates Essex from Middlesex, is a fine structure of one oblate arch, completed in 1839 at a cost of £12,000. The old bridge, from its origin and antiquity, was an object of considerable interest; and though the public rejoiced, the antiquarian mourned, over its demolition. It had been added to at different periods, but originally its width was only thirteen feet six inches; and it had a small chapel upon it dedicated to St. Katherine, in which the passenger could pause and pray—a not unusual appendage to these structures in ancient times. It was at first erected by a royal hand. The way by Old Ford, it appears, was exceedingly dangerous; and Queen Maud, the wife of Henry I., having nearly lost her life in crossing it, built this bridge for the safety of her subjects. Stowe thus records the circumstances:—

"This Matilda, when she saw the forde to be dangerous for them that travelled by the old forde over the river of Lea (for she herself had been well washed in the water) caused two stone bridges to be builded, of which one was situate over Lea, at the head of the towne of Stratford, now called Bow, because the bridge was arched like a bow—a rare piece of work, for before that time the like had never been seen in England. The other over the little brooke commonly called Chavelse Bridge. She made the king's highway of gravel between the two bridges, and gave certain manors to the abbess of Barking, and a mill commonly called the Wiggon, or Wiggen Mill, for the repairing of the bridges and the highway."

When the Abbey of Stratford had been founded, the abbot bought the mill and manors, and undertook to keep the bridges and way in repair. Afterwards he endeavoured to shuffle out of the obligation.

"At length," continues Stowe, "he laid the charge upon one Hugh Pratt, who lived near the bridge and causeway, allowing him certain loaves of bread daily. And by the alms of passengers he kept them in due repair, as did his son William after him, who, by the assistance of Robert Passelowe, chief justice in the time of Henry III., obtained these tolls—of every cart carrying corn, wood, coal, &c., 1d.; of one carrying tael, 2d.; and of one carrying a dead Jew, 8d.; and put up a bar with locks, on Lockkebrugga."



This bar was broken down by the anti-toll men of those days, amongst whom was the abbot of Waltham; and the bridges and causeway were falling into decay, when Queen Eleanor repaired them at her own charge. In 1315, after a suit between the abbess of Barking and the abbot of Stratford, the latter bound himself to take charge of the bridges, the abbess paying him £200. In the seventeenth century the owners of the abbey lands tried to play the same game as the abbot had formerly done, by repudiating the charge. We find the following law report of a trial in the matter:—

“In 1691 an information was brought in the King’s Bench, against Buckeridge and others for not repairing of an highway *ratione tenure* (by reason of their holding or tenure) between Stratford and Bow. It was tried at the bar by an Essex jury. The evidence for the king was, that Maud, the Empress, gave certain lands to the abbess of Barking to repair this way; that the abbess sold these lands to the abbot of Stratford, who, by the consent of his convent, charged all his lands for repair of the highway; and thus it stood at the dissolution. Then, all the lands of the abbot of Stratford, being vested in the crown, were granted to Sir Peter Mewtes, who held them charged for the repairing this highway; and from him by several mesne assignments, they came to the defendants. This was proved by several witnesses living in other parishes. The court was of opinion that upon this evidence all the lands of the abbot were liable to repair this way, and directed the jury accordingly, who found for the plaintiff; and the possessors of the abbey lands were ordered to abide by the tenure.”

The money necessary for these and other works is now raised by rate on land, forming what may be called the homestead of the abbey; but the question has been raised whether the thousands of acres of land which belonged to the house in other places are not also liable under the contract of the old abbot.

The parish is now divided into wards, which may almost be regarded as separate townships, several of them having their ecclesiastical districts and their own churches. The first is Church-street, and includes the villages of West Ham, Upton, Canning Town, which has sprung up within the last few years, and Forest Gate; the latter, as its name implies, is a pleasant district on the forest border, including within its boundary the fine range of buildings of the Industrial School of the children of the Whitechapel Union, and the almshouses for the comfortable shelter of decayed pawnbrokers. The second, Plaistow, is a fine village on the Barking road, towards the marshes. The ward now includes the new hamlets of Hallsville and Silver-town, the latter of which has sprung up around Mr. Silver’s india-rubber clothing works at North Woolwich; and the vast Victoria Docks, extending over a hundred acres of what was before meadow land by the river side, have more than trebled the population of this district within the last few years. In cutting through a peat bog in the formation of these docks there were found a quantity of hazel, yew, oak, nuts, and other vegetable productions; and Antonio Brady, Esq., by whom the matter was noticed at the British Association in 1859, in a communication to us, says—

“Since then I have had presented to me by the manager of the Dock Company some huge bones of a large whale dug out of this peat bog, at a depth of 14 feet below the present surface of the soil, together with a very perfect millstone, about 22 inches in diameter, and a brass dish—clearly indicating that the marsh wherein now dwell thousands of human beings has been formed in the Historic period. These articles are now in my possession.”

Plaistow has a handsome church, which was built in 1830 by means of a subscription of £4,800.

Stratford is the busiest, and, though it contains only 700 acres, a populous part of the parish. It stands at the junction of the roads leading into Cambridgeshire, and through the heart of Essex into

Suffolk ; and with other hives of producing industry it contains the huge locomotive and carriage factory of the Eastern Counties Railway, near which has grown up Hudson's town.

The principal mansion in the parish is Ham House and Park, the seat of the late Samuel Gurney, Esq., which since his decease has been temporarily occupied by Lady Buxton and other branches of his family. There is some historical interest connected with the house, from the distinguished personages who have occasionally sojourned there and partaken of the hospitality of the late benevolent owner. The Chevalier Bunsen, whose son married a daughter of Mr. Gurney, and his sovereign, the present King of Prussia, have been visitors there. The residence of the Rev. A. J. Ram, at Upton ; the Willows, the seat of Captain Pelly, R.N. ; and Plashet House, late the residence of Joseph Fry, Esq., but now unoccupied, are good mansions, with fine gardens and pleasure grounds attached to them. Upton-Lane is principally occupied by the suburban residences of city merchants.

The mother church of West Ham is a large and ancient edifice, having been appropriated to the abbey, when the monks established a vicarage, and carried off most of the honey of the benefice to their own hive. It has a noble tower 74 feet high, with a peal of ten musical bells. The sacred edifice contains a number of fine monuments, one of them of considerable antiquarian interest—an altar tomb in the north chapel, of the date of 1485, to Robert Rook, with figures of himself and family. The district church of Stratford, dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, is a large and handsome structure, completed in 1834, at a cost of about £23,000, of which £18,000 was raised by subscription, and the remaining £5,000 advanced on security of the rates. In 1851, to meet the growing wants of the teeming population, another church, called Christ Church, was built further up in the High-street. Besides these places of worship, there is a district church at Forest Gate, an iron church near the docks, and three school-rooms licensed for the services of the church.

Bonnell's school in West Ham is a noble institution, in which 270 children receive a good useful English education. It was first established in 1769, with large sums of money left by Sarah Bonnell, in 1761, to be applied to this purpose after the death of her brother. Its income is now about £300. a year, derived from dividends on stock.

There are ten almshouses on the east side of the churchyard, built by the parish on the site of two cottages and gardens left by John Newman in 1636, and now inhabited by twenty poor women ; the inmates have divided amongst them the dividends of £1,300., New South-Sea annuities, left by Thomazin Gouge in 1751, of £700. Three per Cent. Consols, left by John Snelgrave in 1807, and of £228. 11s. 6d. Three and Half per Cents., left by S. J. Vachell in 1831. There are also two almshouses in Little Lane, left by Roger Harris in 1633.

The income of the other charities of the parish amounts to about £500. a year, and consists of the following—the rent of 6A. 1R. 6P. of land left by Nicholas Avenon in 1580 for distributing twenty-four penny loaves every Sunday at the church, and the surplus to the vicar for a sermon on Ash-Wednesday ; £4. 10s. 8d. rent-charges out of marsh-land at Leymouth, and a house and orchard at Plaistow, left by John Shipman in 1583 to the poor, who have also £4. out of land in the High Mead, given by Thomas Straight and Henry Stone in 1584 ; £1. 14s. from Rampston's charity, Walthamstow ; £2. out of an estate in the parish, left by Lady Throckmorton in 1591, for poor widows ; 20a. out of land, left by Thos. Staples in 1592 ; £5. out of an estate belonging to Mr. Gurney, left by Wm. Rooke in 1596, for the distribution of 2a. in

bread weekly; £2. out of a house in West Ham-lane, left by Oliver Skinner in 1609; £5. out of New Marsh and Bready Mead, left by Richard Pragell in 1617; 30s. for six widows, out of a house in Plaistow, left by Mary Gwilliam in 1633; £5. from the Grocers' Company, left by Lady Middleton, £2. of it for the poor, and £3. for apprenticing a poor boy; £4. for the poor, and £1. for two sermons, left by William Faucett and Elizabeth Toppesfield in 1631 and 1660; £4. out of land at Plaistow, left by William Davis in 1679 to provide gowns for twelve poor women; £6. out of an estate at Plaistow, left by Clement Pragell in 1680; a house in Leadenhall-street, left by Daniel Ingoll in 1690, for distribution in coals; £10. out of houses and lands at Upton-place, left by Peter Bigott in 1771; £2. out of a house in Great Knight-rider-street, Doctors Commons, left by N. Peckover; 40s. out of New Marsh, for the poor of Plaistow, left by Richard Hale in 1628; the rent of an acre of land in Raikes Lane, given by Peter Blowers in 1616; 52s. out of a house in Church-street, left by Roger Harris in 1663, for twelve poor men or widows; the rents of six cottages, built on property left by Sir Richard Fenn in 1635, the proceeds to be distributed in bread; the rent of 5A. 13P. of marsh-land in Green-lane, Plaistow, purchased with money left by William Tudor, for the poor of Stratford in 1653, and Peter Ward in 1667, for the poor of the three wards; £1. 10s. 5d. from Foot's charity, for the poor of Plaistow; the rent of an acre of marsh in Pully Wall, purchased with money left by Sir William Humble in 1686; for distribution in bread; the dividend of £50. stock, left by Samuel Shepherd in 1773, for coals to the poor of West Ham, and the dividends of £200. Old South Sea Annuities to be distributed by the vicar amongst the sick poor; the dividends of £300. stock, left by J. Atkinson in 1777, for coals to the poor of Plaistow; £164. 7s. 10d. stock, left by John Snelgrave in 1807 for clothing, coals, and bread; the dividends of £50. stock, given by Penelope Colchester, William Fenn, and by the inhabitants; the dividends of £1000. Three per Cent. Consols, left by Mrs. Isabella Wilson, and of £450. left by Mr. Joseph Watts. Besides these charities, there are twelve acres of meadow land in Heigh mead, Stratford, let to the East London Water-works Company for 99 years, at £70. a year, left by Sir Jacob Garraud in 1649, the rent to be applied as follows:—£9. in apprenticing poor children, 26s. 8d. to the vicar, 3s. 4d. to the clerk, and 2s. to the sexton of West Ham, £3. each to East Ham and St. Bennett's, London, and the residue amongst the poor of the three wards; a rent-charge of £10. out of a house and land at Plaistow, left by Mary Battailhey in 1701, 30s. for a sermon on Good Friday, 20s. for repairing her vault, 40s. for the master of Plaistow Sunday-school, 40s. for the master of West Ham Charity-school, 20s. in bread for the poor attending Plaistow Chapel, and £2. 10s. to eight windows in Plaistow and eight in West Ham, to be given on Good Friday; £5. a year out of Cobham Farm, left by John Hiatt in 1719, to apprentice the son of a poor protestant dissenter of Stratford ward.\* The dividends of £200. stock, left by Sarah Bonnell in 1754, £2. 10s. to be given in gowns to five poor widows in Church street on the 25th of January, 10s. 6d. for schooling a poor child, and £2. 19s. 6d. in coals for the poor of Church-street; £339 stock, left by Margaretta Hodshon in 1778, for apprenticing sons of honest and industrious parishioners; the dividends of £600. South Sea Annuities, left by James Cooper, £7. 10s. to be given to thirty poor housekeepers of Plaistow, £7. 10s. in coals for

\* This has not been paid for twenty years.

the twenty almswomen and the poor of Plaistow, £1. 2s. 6d. in bread for the same poor, 15s. for the poor of Church-street, 15s. to the vicar for a sermon on New Year's day, and to the clerk and sexton 3s. each. This account is epitomised from the official report of the Charity Commissioners; since then the whole or part of the houses or land in the bequests of Shipman, Davis, Blower, Tudor, Humble, and Ward, have been sold for railway works, and the money invested. There has also been a bequest by Miss M. Goldthorpe, which produced £180. stock, for the benefit of St. John's church-schools; and Mrs. Hoyte, her sister, left money which produces £3. 9s. a-year for each of the 20 women in the church-yard alms-houses; Harris's alms-houses have been rebuilt by subscription, and increased from four to six; and S. Gurney, Esq., left £1000. Consols, for a new clock at All Saint's, and maintaining the other clocks of the parish. There is a fair division of the charities between the different ecclesiastical districts, and the funds are applied in a manner best calculated to meet the intentions of the donors, and promote the interests of the poor.

**EAST HAM**—lying, as its name implies, rather more to the eastward, is skirted on the south by the Thames, and along one part of it run about 500 acres of marsh land, belonging to the opposite county of Kent, and upon which the North Woolwich station is situated. There is in reality no town. The houses form a scattered village; but in the many pleasant spots of the parish, overlooking the rich pasture lands, the river, and various places on the opposite shores of Kent, are sprinkled some good mansions, the residences of the families of merchants and professional men, who here, as elsewhere in this district, find a ready retreat from the teeming hive of metropolitan business. East and West Ham in the early ages formed one parish, and this part of it, which then belonged to the crown, was given to the Abbey of Westminster—a grant which was confirmed by Edward the Confessor. The monks were afterwards ousted—how, history saith not; but in the reign of Henry III. the property was in the Montfitchet family; and in 1319 East Ham manor was given by John De Lancaster to the convent at Stratford. Lord Henniker is now the owner of it; and Sir John Pelly is lord of East Ham Burnels. There used to be a tradition current amongst the homagers to the effect that

“The tenants of the manor of East Ham are obliged to treat and entertain the tenants of the other manors of West Ham, West Ham Burnels, and Plaiz, the origin of which custom is said to be this—that when the lord of these manors was taken prisoner in France, and sent to his tenants for relief, the tenants of all the other manors complied, and those of East Ham refused; so that, to punish them for their disobedience, he laid the burthen upon them.”

If the leg and the sirloin be now levied upon the offenders it is done in the guise of friendly hospitality.

There are many legends connected with the unhappy Anne Boleyn lingering about the fine old mansion at Green-street. One is that the tower was built for her by her royal lover in the days of his courtship; and that here the beautiful Anne has sat listening to the weeping of a king with the parting sigh of the cast-off Catherine still fresh in his ear. The tale, as told by an old writer, is that—

“Anne Boleyn was betrothed to a young nobleman, who died. About ten months after his death the king demanded her hand; she, as was the custom, requested to be allowed to complete the twelvemonth of mourning for her lover, to which Henry agreed, and for her amusement built the tower in question, from which she had a fine view of the Thames from Greenwich to below Gravesend.”

Further, it is asserted that when the fickle passion of the king—and as fatal as fickle—had been quelled, and the axe was sharpening for the beautiful neck which he had here embraced, the fair victim was confined for a time in this building, from whence she was taken to Greenwich, and so on to the Tower. These traditions have been questioned; and the sceptic has pointed to marks about the building evidently of later date than the Eighth Henry. These, however, have been accounted for as modern reparations; and it is not improbable that upon these old window cills Anne Boleyn rested her fair arm while meditating, first upon the sunrise, and then upon the clouded setting of her greatness. Certainly some of the apartments were at one period fitted up with royal magnificence. The room in the third story of the tower was hung with leather, richly worked with gold; but an avaricious owner of the property rent this down and burnt it, in order to collect the precious metal, which was sold for £30.

The church is an ancient and interesting edifice, with features about it which remind us of the days of its Roman worship—amongst them a second chancel, or a semi-circular sanctuary at the east end, and on the south side a piscina with a double drain. Behind the communion table is a fine ancient monument of black and white marble, to Lord Latimer and his lady, with their life-size effigies, and seven children, in postures of devotion. At the back, over some eulogistic lines, is the inscription—  
 “In memory of the Right Honorable Edmond Nevill, Lord Latimer, Earle of Westmerland, and Dame Jane, his wife, with the Memoralls of their 7 Children, which Edmond was lineally descended from the honorable blood of Kings and Princes, & the 7th Earle of Westmerland of the name of Nevills.” Near by is the following epitaph to one of their daughters:—

“Upon the Death of the right Vertuous faire Noble Ladie Katherine Nevell, first daughter of Edmond, Earle of Westmerland; and Jane, his wife, who died a Vergine, the fifth of December, 1618, being of the Age of xx8 years.

Surviving Marble choyely keep  
 This noble Virgine layde to sleep.  
 A Branch, vntimely Fal'n away  
 From Nevelles Royallized Tree,  
 Great Westmerland too deere a Pray  
 For Death if she could ransomd bee.

Hir Name was Katherine, not in faine  
 Hir nature held referance,  
 Hir Bevtie and hir parts againe  
 Were all compos'd of Excellence.

Blvd, Bevtie, Vertue did contend—  
 All Thies avanc'd in Eminence—  
 Which of them could her most commend,  
 When Death, Enamord, tooke her hence.

Yet Marble tell the time to come,  
 What Erst she was when I am Dumble.”

The celebrated antiquary, Dr. Stukeley, rests in the church-yard.

There are almshouses in the parish, founded with property left for the purpose, by Giles Bream, in 1618—three of the inmates to be poor men of East Ham, and three of Rotterdam, in Cambridgeshire—each of the inmates receiving £8. a-year. The poor have 20s. a year out of Rampston's charity; a rent-charge of £4. out of land in the parish, left by Sir John Hart, in 1603; the rent of 2½a. of marsh land in Barking, left by William Heigham, in 1620; £3. out of Large Field, left by the Countess Dowager of Westmoreland, in 1641—20s. for a sermon, 5s. to the clerk, 5s. for cleaning her tomb, and 30s. in bread to the poor;



the interest of £19. 19s., left by Daniel Holt, in 1838, for distribution in bread; the dividends of £50. stock, left by the Countess Paulett, in 1838; and £3. from Garraud's charity (as in West Ham) for apprenticing a poor boy.

**BARKING** lies below East Ham, upon a short sheltered creek of the Thames, formed by a debouchment of the Roden. It is by no means the little fishing village which those who judge of it by former repute would expect to find it, but a town recently much improved, with good houses and shops, and a population of 5,000, independent of its out-lying wards, which form goodly villages of themselves. The land around is chiefly devoted to the growth of vegetables for the London market. Fishing is the chief trade of the town, about 200 smacks of from 40 to 60 tons each, and carrying from eight to ten men and boys, being engaged in this employment, principally on the Scottish coast and in the North Sea. Barking is no doubt a place of great antiquity. It is believed to have formed part of the demesne lands of the East Saxon kings; and as we traverse the streets and suburbs we imagine we trace venerable patches of the past about it. There is still the remnant of the market held on Saturday, under royal grant in monastic days; and over the market house is a town hall, built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which, kept in a neat state, forms a very convenient place for courts and gatherings upon public occasions.

**THE ABBEY.**—As the visitor enters Barking he will notice by the roadside a little antique looking brick gateway, and an old wall enclosing a meadow, adjacent to the parish church; and had not history told him, he would hardly imagine that this was the site of one of the most ancient and noble monastic institutions in the kingdom, over which queens presided—that this was the spot on which the Norman conqueror dwelt when England had just been prostrated at his feet, while he was building fortifications to overawe the Londoners ere he took up his residence amongst them. The buildings of the abbey covered an extensive tract of ground; but little idea can now be formed of them, save of the church, adjacent to the present church-yard, which has been shown, by the test of the spade tracing the foundations, to have been 170 feet long from east to west, and 150 in the transepts; and as we look down upon it from the ground above we can almost picture to ourselves the positions of its altars and its shrines, the baronial abbess and her troop of veiled nuns marching up the aisles, the royal guests at their devotions, the priests in their gorgeous vestments, the censer sending forth its perfumed smoke, the all but living creations of the painter's hand, the mellowed outbursts of the musician's mind, and all the pomp and pageantry by which the then religion of the land

“Led captive the intoxicated soul.”

The following history of the abbey is from a manuscript of Mr. Smart Lethieullier, a learned antiquarian, who was lord of the manor, and a resident in the neighbourhood, and had thus the best opportunities for authenticating what he wrote:—

“Barking Abbey, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is said to have been the first convent for women established in this kingdom. It was founded about the year 670, in the reigns of Sebbi and Sighere, Kings of the East Saxons, by St. Erkenwald, bishop of London, in compliance with the earnest desire of his sister Ethelburg, who was appointed the first abbess. The founder was nearly allied to the Saxon monarchs, being great grandson of Uffa, the first king, and second son of Auna, the seventh king of the East Angles: he was also the first bishop who sat in the see of London after

the building of St. Paul's church by King Ethelbert. The monastic writers speak in very high terms of his piety and zeal in the discharge of his episcopal functions, and tell us, that when he was grown weak through age and infirmities, he was carried about in a litter from place to place throughout his diocese, constantly teaching and instructing the people till his death, which happened about the year 685, whilst he was on a visit to his sister Ethelburg, at Barking. After his death great disputes arose (as we are informed by the monkish annalists) between the nuns of Barking, the convent of Chertsey, and the citizens of London, about the interment of his body, each claiming an exclusive right to the bones of the venerable prelate. Nor was this dispute terminated without the intervention of a miracle, which declared in favour of the Londoners, who, having obtained the body, bore it off in triumph. On the road they were stopped at Ilford and Stratford by the floods. Upon this occasion the historians record another miracle, by which a safe and easy passage was procured for the corpse of the holy man and his attendants. The bishop was canonized, and frequent miracles were said to be wrought at his tomb. Ethelburg, the founder's sister, before mentioned, was the first abbess. The time of her death is uncertain, but she was buried at Barking, and received the honor of canonization. Her successor was Hildelitha, who had been sent for by the founder out of France to instruct his sister Ethelburg in the duties of her new station. She also obtained a place among the Romish saints. After her, several abbesses of the royal blood succeeded. Oswyth, daughter of Edifrith, king of Northumberland; Ethelburg, wife to Ina, king of the West Saxons, who was canonized; and Cuthburgh, sister of King Ina, who had been a nun at Barking in the time of St. Hildelitha. She died about the middle of the eighth century. Nothing more is known of this monastery till the year 870, when it was burnt to the ground by the Danes, and the nuns either slain or dispersed. It laid desolate about one hundred years, being within the territories which were ceded by Alfred to Gormund, the Danish chief. About the middle of the tenth century it was rebuilt by King Edgar, as an atonement for his having violated the chastity of Wulfhilda, a beautiful nun, at Wilton, whom he appointed abbess. He restored the monastery to its former splendour and endowed it with large revenues. After Wulfhilda had presided over the convent many years, some dissensions arose between her and the priests of Barking, who referred their cause to Elfrida, the widow of Edgar, and mother of Ethelred, whom they requested to eject Wulfhilda, and assume the government herself, a proposal to which she readily assented. Wulfhilda retired to a religious house which she had founded at Horton, in Devonshire; and the queen putting herself at the head of this monastery continued to preside over it, as the historians inform us, 20 years, at the end of which term a violent sickness seizing her at Barking, she repented of the injury she had done to Wulfhilda and reinstated her in her former situation. Wulfhilda seven years afterwards died at London, whither she had retired to avoid the Danish army, then invading England, and was enrolled among the Romish saints, being the fifth abbess who had received the honor of canonization. At the time of the Norman Conquest, Alfgiva, a Saxon lady, who had been appointed by Edward the Confessor, was abbess. The historians, Carte and Brady, relate that William the Conqueror, soon after his arrival in England, retired to Barking abbey, and there continued till the fortress he had begun in London was completed. Hither, they say, whilst preparations were making for his coronation, repaired to him Edwin, Earl of Mercia; Morca, Earl of Northumberland; and many others of the nobility and great men of the land, who swore fealty to him and were reinstated in their possessions.] After the death of Alfgiva, Maud, Henry the First's queen, assumed the government of the convent; and it is not improbable this connexion with Barking induced her the more readily to build the bridge at Bow. Maud, wife of King Stephen, followed the example of her aunt, on the death of Agnes, the abbess, in 1186; but she soon resigned the charge to Adella, sister of Paris Fitz John, a baron of considerable note, who was slain in a battle near Cardigan. During her government Stephen, with his queen and the whole court, were entertained for several days at the abbey. Her successor was Mary, sister to Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, whose appointment is said to have been intended by Henry II. as an atonement for the injustice he had done her family, who were banished the kingdom as a punishment for the prelate's insolence. From the time of Mary à Becket but few remarkable occurrences are connected with the history of this abbey. The most material, as it affected the interest of its inmates, was a great inundation, which happened about the year 1376, and broke down the banks of the Thames, at Dagenham. It is first mentioned in a record of the ensuing year, when the convent petitioned that they might be excused from contributing an aid to the king, at the time of a threatened invasion, on account of the expenses they had been at in endeavouring to repair their damages. Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, retired to Barking Abbey after the murder of her husband in 1297, and died there in 1299, having, as some say, professed herself a nun. During the time of the Queen Dowager, Catherine de la Pole, Edmund and Jasper Tudor, her sons



by Owen Tudor, were sent to be educated at this abbey, a certain salary being allowed to the abbess for their maintenance. The nuns of Barking were of the Benedictine order. The abbess was appointed by the king till about the year 1200, when, by the interference of the pope, the election was vested in the convent and confirmed by the royal authority. The abbess of Barking was one of the few who were baronesses in right of their station; for being possessed of thirteen knights fees and a half, she held her lands of the king by a barony; and, though her sex prevented her from having a seat in parliament, or attending the king in the wars, yet she always furnished her quota of men, and had precedency over the abbesses. In her convent she always lived in great state; her household consisted of chaplains, an esquire, gentlemen, gentlewomen, yeomen, grooms, a clerk, a yeoman-cook, a groom-cook, a pudding-wife, &c."

In the year 1452, after several disputes between Catherine de la Pole and Sir John Greening, then vicar, an award was made to the following effect:—that instead of a hog, a goose, a cheese, and a lamb, which the vicar had heretofore received of the lady abbess, he and his successors should have three yards of good cloth, two ells broad; provision every day in the convent for himself and his servant so long as he should not be of a litigious and contentious disposition, he sitting at the chaplain's table, and his servant with domestics of the convent; but if the said vicar should, without license of the lady abbess, or her deputy, have any familiarity or discourse with any one or two of the nuns, he should, for the first offence (after proper admonition), lose his diet for a week; after a second admonition, forfeit a month's diet; and if he should offend a third time he should be excluded the convent during life, unless restored by the lady abbess's special grace and favour. In all other respects he was to be satisfied with the profits of the vicarage, which were then valued at £27. 5s. 2d. per annum.

Dorothy Barleigh, the last abbess, surrendered the house to Henry VIII. in 1539, its revenues being then valued at £1,084. 6s. 2d. a year. The manor of Barking, which was paramount over the Hundred, remained in the crown till the time of James I., when it was sold for £2,000., and a fee-farm rent of £160. a year, to Thomas Fanshaw, Esq. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the property was in Sir William Hewitt, Lord Mayor of London; and Strype tells the following story of the manner in which it came into possession of Mr. Osborne, the ancestor of the Dukes of Leeds:—

"Sir William Hewitt, Lord Mayor in 1559, who then lived upon London Bridge, had a daughter to whom this mischief happened: the maid, playing with her out of a window over the river Thames, by chance dropped her in almost beyond expectation of being saved. A young gentleman named Osborne, then apprenticed to Sir William, the father, at this calamitous accident leaped in bravely and saved the child. In memory of which deliverance, and in gratitude, her father afterwards bestowed her in marriage to the said Mr. Osborne, with a very great dowry, whereof the late estate of Sir Thomas Fanshaw, in the parish of Barking, in Essex, was a part. Several persons of quality courted the said young lady, and particularly the Earl of Shrewsbury. But Sir William was pleased to say Osborne saved her and Osborne should enjoy her."

The manor was purchased by Smart Lethieullier, Esq., and by marriage it has descended to Sir Charles Hulse, who is lord paramount of the parish and the Hundred; but there are smaller manors owned by other parties.

There are a number of old manor-houses in the parish, most of which are occupied by farmers. Amongst them is Eastbury-house, a large brick mansion, with an octangular tower, and finely ornamented chimnies and gables, generally considered to have been built by Sir Wm. Denham, but there is the best possible evidence that it was erected by Clement Pegsley, Esq., who lived there in great state, and died in 1578. In his will he calls it Estbury hall. There is a peculiar interest attached

to the house in the locality from a tradition religiously believed, that it was here the conspirators in the gunpowder plot held their secret meetings, and that preparations had been made by those connected with it to witness the catastrophe from the top of the great tower, which commands a view over London. There is no historical evidence of this, and even the tradition is confused and contradictory. The mansion has long been partly unoccupied. We found long galleries wreathed with cobwebs and half filled with lumber,—large apartments converted into lofts for hay, corn, and harness, with remnants of ancient frescoes here and there to be traced on the walls—sad memorials of their faded grandeur; but we rejoice to hear that this interesting piece of antiquity is likely to be restored.

The extensive earth-works at Uphall, which lie to the north of the town, by the road-side, near Ilford, are objects of speculation and interest to the antiquary. Part of them has been levelled, but they incline to the form of a square, and enclose an area of upwards of 48 acres. On the north, east, and south sides, the trenches are single, but double on that which is parallel to the Roden. There was also a double trench and a bank at a short distance from it, with a morass on the south side. The ground is dry and level on the north and east sides; and at the north-west corner there was a fine spring of water, guarded by an inner work, and a high keep of earth. The origin of these works have been the subject of much loose conjecture. Gough traces the name of the parish to them—*Burgh-ing*, a fortification in a meadow. Others connect them with the Conqueror's visit to Barking. Mr. Lethieullier was of opinion that it was the site of a Roman town, the materials of which were carried away to build Barking Abbey. We are not prepared to accede to this; but we incline to the belief that they were the work of Roman hands.

At the entrance to the present church-yard is a square embattled gateway, with octagonal turrets in each side, and in the centre a pointed arch. This is believed to have belonged to the old abbey. Above the arch is an apartment, reached by a narrow staircase, called in old records "*The chapel of the Holy Rood lofte atte-gate, edified to the honour of Almighty God and the Holy Rood,*"—having against the wall a representation of the crucifixion in alto-relievo. Of the antiquity of the figure there is no doubt; but we incline to the belief that this is not its original position. Its situation at one corner of the chapel, which somewhat mars it, appears to show that it has been brought from some other building, and worked almost at random into the wall here. The structure contained a bell, whence it is generally called *Fire-Bell-gate*; and Mr. Lysons conjectures that it was used for the ancient curfew.

The church of Barking is a fine ancient structure of stone, and contains a number of monuments, one against the south wall to Sir Charles Montagu, who died in 1625, representing a tent in which Sir Charles is seen sitting, his head upon a desk, on which lie his helmet and gauntlets, while the entrance is guarded by sentinels, and near by is a page with a horse ready for the field.

There are numerous charities in the parish. Before the passing of the new poor law, by a local Act of the 26th of Geo. III., all the charities for the poor, not directed for a particular object, were applied to the poor-rates, and a rent-charge of £20., purchased with money left by Sir James Campbell in 1641 to found a school (then fallen into a ruinous state), was appropriated to the education of children in con-

union with the workhouse. The workhouse has been converted into shops, let on a ninety-nine years lease, at £120. a year, and a large national school having been erected on the site of the old one, £20. is applied in aid of it. By an order of the court of chancery, dated 30th June, 1868, the whole of the charities have been apportioned and divided between the several ecclesiastical divisions of the parish, namely: St. Margaret's, Barking; St. Mary's Church, Great Ilford and Barking Side; and the same are now applied by the parish officers for the benefit of the poor. The charities have been divided as follows:—*To St. Margaret's, Barking, exclusively.*—1. A rent-charge of £3. a year, given by Henry Bertie, Esq., in 1701, for a weekly distribution of bread to the poor of Barking town. 2. The dividends of £201. 19s. 3d. Consols, left by Edward Smith Biggin, in 1833, to be distributed in coals and bread. 3. A rent-charge of £6. 13s. 4d., given by William Nutbrown, in 1596, out of the rectory of Ash, in Kent. 4. Nine almshouses at Barking, given by John Wilde, in 1614. *To Ilford and Barking Side.*—5. The annual sum of £3. given by Robert Bertie, Esq., in 1678, for apprenticing a poor boy of Great Ilford Ward, and payable by the City of London. 6. The dividends of £113. 1s. 1d. Consols, left by Mrs. Margaret Hall, in 1846. 7. The dividends of £413. 1s. 1d. Consols, purchased in 1853, under the provisions of 14 and 15 Victoria, for disafforesting the forest of Hainault, in Essex, and to be annually distributed in coals or other fuel amongst the poor widows of those parts of the parish within the forest not receiving parochial relief, and whose husbands have been dead a year. *Between St. Margaret's, Barking, and Ilford, in equal shares.*—8. The dividends of £400. Reduced Annuities, left by James Hayes, Esq., in 1818, to be equally divided amongst twelve poor parishioners, who receive £10. each. 9. The annual sum of £40. left by Thomas and Ann Nepton, in 1764, paid by the Poulterers' Company to poor parishioners, in sums of 5s. each, and issuing out of houses in Dunning's Alley, Bishopsgate street. The remaining charities are, namely—10. A rent-charge of £1. per annum, issuing out of land in Movers Lane, Barking, left by Alice Leonard, in 1565. 11. A rent-charge of £1. per annum, issuing out of land at Barking, left by Joseph Dent, in 1725. 12. The dividends of £65. 15s. East India stock, left by Thomas Collett, in the year 1738. 13. The rent of 5½ acres of land in Eastbury Level, purchased with £100. left by Sir James Campbell, in 1614. 14. The rent of 6 acres of copyhold land called Cotland's, granted by Sir Thomas Fanshawe, in 1679. 15. The rent of 6½ acres of land called Kingsbridge marsh, given by Jonathan and Thomas Collett in 1741. 16. The rents of the market house estate, comprising the town hall at Barking, and the tolls of the fair and market, with the adjoining houses, given by Sir Thomas Fanshawe in 1662; these are directed by the order of the court to form one fund, and to be annually divided as follows: to St. Margaret's, Barking, three-fifths, together with the sum of £8, and to Great Ilford two-fifths less £8. Out of the monies payable to Great Ilford, Barking Side receives one-fourth. The parish is entitled besides to two presentations to Christ's Hospital, given by John Fowke, Esq. in 1686; Barking and Ilford take these alternately, Barking Side taking every fourth presentation out of those apportioned to Ilford. The late J. S. Thompson, who died in 1859, left £100 to the National School, and the late Mr. John Wade, of Ilford, left in the same year £100 for the poor of Ilford.

The outlying wards of Barking are extensive villages. Great Ilford

is, in fact, a town, equalling in population the mother parish, from which, ecclesiastically, it is separated, and has a handsome church, erected in 1831 at a cost of £3,500. This district includes Chadwell Ward; Barking Side, where a new church was erected in 1840 at an outlay of £3,000; and Aldborough Hatch, at which there is a chapel-of-ease; and within its circuit are many good seats and handsome residences. Within the village is Clements, the property of the late J. S. Thompson, Esq., with fine walks, shrubberies, and gardens around it, and the house is enriched with a collection of antiquities. Cranbrook House, about half a mile north of the village, the seat of J. Davis, Esq., is a good house, greatly improved, with tasteful and park-like grounds. Further on is Valentines, a large brick mansion, in a pleasant little park, originally built by J. Chadwick, Esq., a son-in-law of Archbishop Tillotson, and the residence of J. C. Holcombe, Esq. In the village is a hospital, originally founded by the Abbess of Barking, in the reign of Henry II., for leprous tenants and servants, to consist of a secular master, a leprous master, thirteen leprous brethren, two chaplains, and two clerks. After the dissolution, when it was valued at £21. 8s. 4d. a-year, it was granted to Thomas Fanshaw, Esq., who turned it into a sort of alms-house for six poor men, who receive £2. 11s. each, and a chaplain with a salary of £14. a year. It is now vested in the Marquis of Salisbury, who pays the yearly stipends; and the chapel, which is 100 feet by 20 feet, was the only place of worship for the inhabitants before the erection of the new church.

LITTLE ILFORD is a small parish on the opposite side of the Roden. It includes the gaol, erected in 1831 at a cost of £30,000, and since enlarged and improved. Its little church contains the vault of the Læuthiellier family; and amongst the inscriptions is the following to the learned antiquarian from whose manuscript we have quoted:—

"In memory of Smart Læthiellier, Esq., a gentleman of polite literature and elegant taste, an encourager of art and ingenious artists, a studious promoter of literary enquiries, a companion and a friend of learned men; industriously versed in the science of antiquity, and richly possessed of the curious productions of nature, but who modestly desired no other inscription on his tomb than what he had made the rule of his life—to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God. He was born Nov. 3rd, 1701, and died without issue, August 27th, 1760."

The charities for the poor consist of the dividends of £1,000. stock, left by John Hayes, in 1818; and £1. a year from Hyde's charity.

About the Ilfords are the elephant beds, which have attracted the notice of the learned—spots in the excavations for brick-earth, in which the bones of huge elephants, identical with the Siberian mammoth, of the rhinoceros, of large oxen, and other animals, have been dug up. The remnants of these giants of ancient days have enriched various geological museums. Antonio Brady, Esq., in an able paper on the subject, says—

"There is no trace of the works of man associated with the bones at Ilford. I have searched for them in company with Mr. Prestwich, Mr. Flowers, and other geological friends, I have made diligent inquiry of the workmen, and I can confidently assert that as yet no evidence that man and the mammoth were contemporaries exists at Ilford."

DAGENHAM.—THE BEACH.—Below Barking, Dagenham stretches from the marshes on the borders of the Thames far into the forest lands seven miles inland, the northern border being full five miles from the straggling village. Sir Charles Hulse is lord of Dagenham, and T. Hanbury, Esq. owns the manor of Cookermouth, which comprises the southern part of the parish. Valence-house, formerly held by the Valences, earls of Pembroke, under the Abbess of Barking, is

a good old modernized mansion; and Paraloes, the seat of the Fanshaws for the last two centuries, is a spacious brick building, standing in a park, and has embattled pediment and turrets—the work, however, of modern hands, the house having been new fronted in 1816. Near the embankment of the Thames is a broad pool of 44 acres, the standing mark of the inundation known as Dagenham Breach, which in 1707 laid desolate this part of the parish. On the 17th of December in that year, an extraordinary high tide blew up a small sluice made in the sea-wall for the purpose of drainage. This might easily have been stopped by prompt action, but it was neglected, and neglect led to its usual consequences. The water rushing in and out at each succeeding tide, tore open a channel 100 yards wide and 20 feet deep, by which a thousand acres of rich land, worth £3 an acre, were overwhelmed by the waters; and at the mouth of the breach a sandbank was formed, stretching a mile into the Thames, threatening to destroy the navigation. For seven years the proprietors of the land endeavoured to rescue their property, but struggled with the water in vain; and after having expended more than the value of the soil they gave up the work in despair. Parliament then interposed in order to preserve the navigation of the river, and a tax was laid on all vessels passing up and down, to raise money to repair the breach. William Boswell contracted for £16,500 to stop the breach, remove the shelf in the Thames, and make good the walls. He failed, and abandoned the undertaking. In 1715 Captain Perry undertook the work for £25,000, and a promise that if that was not sufficient he should be recommended to parliament for a further grant. In September, 1717, an extraordinary tide tore down his works to their foundations. Twice afterwards they were damaged in a similar way. In five years, however, he accomplished his task at an expenditure of £40,472. 18s. 8½d. By the Act of 7 Geo. I. c. 20, the further sum of £15,000 was granted to Captain Perry, but after all he was a loser by his successful work. In the process of the works a moorlogg, or vein of buried wood, which appears to run for miles along the side of the river, was cut into. It lies three or four feet under the surface of the marsh, and is about ten feet in depth. It contained yew trees fourteen or sixteen inches in diameter, and perfectly sound; willows more than two feet in girth, but like touchwood; and mingled with it was small brushwood, and even hazel-nuts, which appeared sound to the eye but crumbled to the touch. Some have indulged learned surmises that these are the remains of the devastation of the deluge; others that they are the remnants of the old forest beaten down and buried by storms, and inundations at a later age; but the most practical conclusion is that they were purposely laid there by some of the rude engineers of olden times, as foundations for works to shut out the troublesome flow of the Thames on to the neighbouring lands.

The church is a good structure, which was thoroughly restored in 1806. It contains a number of monuments and inscriptions—one a tomb of white and grey marble, with the figures of a judge in his robes, and a lady, and an inscription which states that—

“Sir Richard Alibon, knt., a person of extraordinary abilities, was advanced by King James, the Second to the rank of a judge, though he was a Catholic, and that he was the only one of that persuasion who had for one hundred and fifty years been advanced to such dignity; and that he died 22nd August, 1688, aged 53.”

There are good free schools in the parish, founded by William Ford, a farmer, who, in 1825, left £10,000. Three per Cent. Bank Annuities



for the purpose, with the provision that they should be conducted according to the principles of the Church of England, but not on the Bell, Lancasterian, or any other new system, and that no person of the name of Fanshaw should act as a trustee; a scheme was laid down by the Court of Chancery in 1828, and the income is applied in payment of the master and mistress, clothing the children, providing coals, &c. The dividends of £900. stock, left by the same donor, are applied in the distribution of clothing for the aged poor, on the 16th of December. The other charities for the poor are a rent-charge of £2. left by William Armestead, out of Hay-street farm, Hornchurch, in 1657; £5. a year out of Want Farm, left by William Witham; the dividends of £25. 5s. stock, left by Mrs. Welper, in 1820; a rent-charge of £2. 12s., out of Two Acre Piece, left by John White, in 1671; the dividends of £5,000. stock, derived from annuities left by Richard Uphill, in 1716, for apprenticing poor children; £100 stock, left by Thomas Waters, in 1756, for the instruction of poor children; and 40s. a year out of a house left by Richard Comyns, in 1757, to be distributed amongst poor widows not receiving parochial relief.

WOODFORD has little about it of old historical note. It stands in the forest, with its various eminences commanding beautiful views not only of the neighbouring vales and woodlands, but into Kent and Hertfordshire, and over London. Woodford Wells—so called from a well of miraculous repute in olden times,—and Woodford Bridge, which are little outlying hamlets, as well as the village itself, with its pretty green and shaded walks, are visited in the summer months by troops of city pilgrims, who come to worship nature at her rural shrine. The parish contains a number of good mansions, principally the retreats of merchants and men in metropolitan trade. This was one of the lordships given by Harold to the monks of Waltham, and it remained in their possession till the dissolution. The manorial rights are now vested in the Earl of Mornington, having been purchased by Richard, Earl Tilney, in 1707; and it is a singular circumstance that the custom of what is called “borough English” prevails here—that is, that the youngest, and not the eldest, son succeeds as heir to a copyhold estate. The church is an elegant modern structure, having been built on the site of the old one, in 1817, at a cost of about £9,000; and a yew tree, which was noticed as remarkable a century ago, still flourishes in the yard; the trunk, at rather more than four feet from the ground, measures fourteen feet in circumference, and its boughs form a circle of 180 feet.

The charities consist of a yearly rent-charge of £5., purchased with £100. poor's stock, in 1657, of which £40. was left by Eliza Elwes, in 1625; 40s. a year out of the estate called Naked Beauty, left by Sir Henry Lee; 20s. a year from Hampton's charity; the dividends of £260. stock, derived from gifts by William Prescott and others; £10. a year left by Ellen Dodd, in 1814—£4. 14s. for four sermons, and £5. 6s. for distribution in bread; the dividends of £283. 9s. 11d. stock, left by Ellen Hawker, in 1816, and of £731. 10s. 4d., purchased with £500. left by Dr. Rogers, £100. by John Harman, and £85. given by Dr. Waite, the Prince of Condé, and Mrs. Angier; the dividends of £500. stock, left by John Popplewell, in 1820, for the repair of a monument, 10s. to the clerk, and distribution in coals, and of £300. given by Anne and Rebecca Popplewell, for like purposes in 1831; and the dividends of £129. 8s. stock, purchased with money left by Henry Burmester in 1823.

WALTHAMSTOW adjoins Woodford, on the verge of the forest, and abounds in beautiful woodland scenery, with a tract of marsh land towards the Lea, by which river it is separated from Middlesex. Its population, which is that of a good town, and has vastly increased within the last ten years, is scattered over a series of separated villages—Church-end, Chapel-end, North-end, Marsh-street, Higham hill, Clay-street, Whips-cross, and Wood-street. In Edward the Confessor's reign the greater part of the parish belonged to Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, who so often plotted against the Conqueror, and at last perished on the block. Subsequently it was divided amongst various noble families; and Viscount Maynard is now lord of Walthamstow-Toni, the other manors being held by various individuals. There are many good houses and pleasant seats in the villages and upland spots of the parish. Higham-house, occupied by William Locke, Esq., a good mansion on the north side, is picturesquely situated; and Bellevue House, a modern erection of brick, with stone facings, and a semi-circular portico supported by Ionic columns, a fine lake and 76 acres of park and pleasure grounds about it, stands upon an eminence which commands the vale of the Lea, the forest, and a large tract of Essex, with glimpses of the scenery in four other counties.

The church is a noble and imposing structure, believed to have been partly erected by Sir George Monox, Lord Mayor of London in 1514, who sleeps with his lady in the chapel at the east end. There are a number of monuments in the sacred edifice, some of them to the memory of the Conyers and Maynard families.—There are three district churches,—St. James's, at Marsh-street; St. Peter's, in New-road; and St. John's, at Chapel-End.

There are thirteen almshouses and a good free school near the church, in which the foundation scholars, for 10s. a quarter, are taught Latin, English, writing, and arithmetic. These were founded in the 38rd of Henry VIII., by Sir George Monox, who endowed them with a rent-charge of £42. 17s. 4d. out of houses in Allhallows Staining, London, £6. 18s. 4d. for a priest to teach 20 to 30 free scholars, £5. 18s. 4d. for an obit in the church, £19. 14s. 4d. for the alms-people, £3. 8s. 8d. to the parish clerk to help to teach the children, and £5. for coals to the alms-people. Edmond Alford, in 1599, further charged the houses with £9., £7 to be applied to the alms-people, and £2. to the schoolmaster or some other person to distribute it. The obit was discontinued, and the rent-charges were reduced to £21., in 1782, on the owners giving up to the parish the chapel and north aisle in the church, which were added by the founder. The following have been added to the endowment: £280. 13s. Stock, left by John Herman, in 1815; £756. left by Richard Banks, in 1812; £500. left by William Bedford, in 1822. The proceeds are applied to the alms-priest schoolmaster, and in stipends and coals to the alms-people. There are also six almshouses for poor widows, built by Mary Squire, in 1795, and endowed with £2,000 stock, each inmate to receive £13., £3. to be applied in repairs, and £6. to be distributed amongst twelve poor members of the church in Walthamstow. Maynard's charity consists of a farm of 52A. 3R. 24P., at Higham Hill, purchased with £950. left by Henry Maynard, in 1686, and a farm of 30A. 2R. 14P. at Hale-end; the proceeds are applied to the vicar, to the schoolmaster, for distribution amongst the poor, and in rings to the churchwarden and overseers for their trouble. The other charities are, a rent-charge of £99. from a



farm in Marsh-lane, given by James Holbrook, in 1805; £7. 10s. out of land left by Tristram Conyers, in the 1st of James I.; £3. out of land and buildings in Marsh-street, left by Richard Garnett, in 1642; £2. 12s. out of land left by Thomas Gamuel, in 1642; the interest of £180. from bequests of Thomas Turner and Anthony and Daniel Compton; Pound Field, of 1A. 2R. 17P., left by Jeremiah Wakelin, in 1735, for distribution of bread and meat on new year's day; a rent-charge of £2. out of Stone Hall estate, left (with similar bequests to neighbouring parishes) by Robert Rampston, in 1685; the dividends of £1,000. stock, purchased with money left by Thomas Legendre, in 1752, and Catherine Woolbell, in 1757, distributed in coals; the dividends of £500. stock, left by Mary Newell, in 1810, for apprenticing yearly one poor boy, and the aid of the church Sunday-school; four fields of 13A. 1R. 16P., purchased with various benefactions in 1650; 13A. 3R. 8P., of land in Hale-end lane, purchased with money left by Thomas Colby, in 1633; three houses and gardens, left by Edward Corbett, in 1674, 20s. to the minister for a sermon, 5s. to the clerk, and the rest to the poor; 3R. 6P. of land given by the Rev. W. Hyle, in 1487; a rent-charge of £10. out of Grange Hill Farm, Lincoln, left by S. Trafford, in 1723, for repairing his tomb, and the remainder to the poor.—6A. 2R. of land were left by Edmund Wise, in 1782; £100. stock by Thomas Sims, in 1782; and £100. stock, by John Rigge, in 1806, for repairing tombs, and the surplus is applied to the poor.—Large quantities of coals, &c., are distributed from these charities.

Of LEYTON, and its important and appendant hamlet of LEYTONSTONE—large and delightful villages, which, though within six miles of London, are of a sylvan character—the Earl of Mornington and J. Pardoe, Esq., are now the lords. Part of the lands were given by Harold as an endowment to the Abbey of Waltham; the manor of Leyton belonged to Stratford Abbey; and the Priory of St. Helen's, London, owned Marks; so that the monks monopolized the greater part of the lordships and lands. It was, however, a place of importance long before that period. Here the Roman raised his villa or built his station—though it was certainly not Durolitum, as Camden and others imagined. In 1716, in digging up land for a garden near the Manor-house, vast foundations of buildings, partly of stone, were found, extending over two acres, in which were large quantities of Roman bricks and tiles, pieces of Egyptian granite, and several medals. In deepening a pond near the spot, about the same period, huge wrecks of former buildings were discovered lying under ten feet of clay—walls four feet in thickness, large oak timbers morticed together as if for a floor, and at the end of a flight of steps leading to it stood an arched and moulded gateway, ten feet high and six feet broad,—probably the remains of long-buried Roman habitations. This conjecture appears to be confirmed by the fact that urns with bones and ashes, and silver and brass coins, both consular and imperial, from the time of Julius Cæsar, were found about the site of the uncovered ruins, as well as in the church-yard and near Ruckholts. Silver coins with Saxon characters on them have also been picked up. It is less, however, for its antiquarian interest than for its handsome houses embosomed in trees, the beautiful suburban villas scattered about, the views over meadow and marsh land, and the glimpses of forest scenery, that the traveller will pause as he passes the twin villages of Leyton and Leytonstone. The seats of most pretension are the manor-house, belonging to J. Pardoe, Esq.; Leyton house, a large brick mansion,

with tasteful grounds, the residence of Mr. Alderman Sidney; the country home of J. Masterman, Esq., a handsome house in the north; Walwoods, a large and noble mansion on the verge of the forest at Leytonstone, built by Lord Colchester, in 1693, and now the seat of William Cotton, Esq.; and Leytonstone House, which was one of the country residences of the late Sir E. North Buxton.

The church is a neat building, and, except the tower, was rebuilt in 1821, at a cost of £4,445., the greater part of which was raised by subscriptions, and the rest was supplied by rate. There are a number of monuments; the most stately are to Sir William Hickes, who was a great sufferer for his steady attachment to Charles I.; to Charles Goring, Earl of Norwich, who died in 1670; and to William Bowyer, the celebrated printer. John Strype, the well-known antiquarian and historian, was minister here in 1677, and held the vicarage for 68 years. The district church of Leytonstone was erected in 1833, at a cost of £6,000., raised principally by subscriptions.

The National Schools are in the Elizabethan style, built in 1847, at a cost of £1,200, raised by subscription, on the site of an old free school founded in 1698, by Robert Osler, who endowed it with a rent-charge of £12. for seven boys of Leyton and seven of Walthamstow; William Bosanquet also left £200. stock, in 1813, for the dividends to supply the free scholars with books and stationery. There are eight almshouses near the Church for poor widows, founded by John Smith, in 1653, endowed with a rent-charge of £20. out of Hughes Farm; £12. a year out of Bevill Upland Farm, Mayland, left by Charles Phillipps, in 1747; £6. out of a house in Dover-street, London, left by John Phillipps, in the same year; the dividends of £300. stock, left by William Bosanquet, in 1813; of £300. left by Thomas Lane, in 1817; of £200. left by Magdalen Daubuz, in 1818; of £250. Bank Stock, left by Mrs. C. Moyer, in 1827; of £120. 9s. 8d. left by Mary Bertie, in 1832; and a rent-charge of £1. out of Coopersale estate, left by Henry Archer, in 1584.—The poor have also £1. a year, from Rampston's charity; the rent of Small Gains, 3*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.*, purchased with money left by Sir William and Lady Hickes, in 1702; £39. a year out of a farm in Marsh-Land; and £550. stock, called "the inhabitants' charity," arising from sums paid for the enclosure of waste lands. Several of these charities are applied in the distribution of bread.

WANSTEAD, adjacent to Leyton, planted upon the southern verge of the forest, is one of the most picturesque villages of the district; and its subject hamlet of Snaresbrook, with its wild forest woodland, and the Roding here forming a fine expanse of water, dotted over with little islands, is rich in beautiful sylvan scenery, which in the summer season attracts crowds of pleasure seekers from the metropolis, and sends them back to the crowded city with exalted ideas of the charms of country life. Wanstead Flats, which was an open common of about 800 acres, has been partly enclosed. Traces of the Romans have been found in the southern part of the parish, in the shape of a tessellated pavement, coins, ruined foundations, urns, pateræ, calcined bones, and other relics—showing that the imperial rulers either selected the spot for the erection of their villas or seized upon it for a military station. Wanstead was given in Saxon times to the Abbey of St. Peter's, Westminster, and was confirmed to it by Edward the Confessor, but afterwards passed to the Bishop of London. On the dawn of Protestantism it was forfeited by a recusant tenant, who refused to acknowledge the king's supremacy, and came to Lord Rich—after-

wards to Dudley, the Great Earl of Leicester, who resided in the ancient mansion, and here entertained his royal mistress, Queen Elizabeth, for several days, during the time he was basking in her favour. James I., too, dwelt here for some time in 1607. This monarch granted the estate to Sir Henry Mildmay, Master of the Jewel Office, and son of Humphrey Mildmay, Esq., of Danbury, who lost it for acting as one of the judges of Charles I. Being granted away again by the crown, it was purchased by Sir Josiah Child, one of the merchant princes of London. His son built Wansted House, near the site of the ancient mansion, in 1715. In 1731 he was advanced to the dignity of an earl, an act of parliament being passed three years afterwards to enable the family to assume the name of Tilney. This mansion was one of the most magnificent and richly furnished in the kingdom. The written description left of it conveys but a faint idea of what tradition reports of the lavish costliness with which it was adorned. It was built of Portland stone, with a very grand portico in the centre, supported by large Corinthian columns. The grand hall was fifty-three feet long and forty-five wide. Wansted House, which abounded with fine paintings and statues, says the description, "is one of the noblest houses in England."

This princely dwelling was often the resort of royal personages; and the Prince of Condé and others of the fugitive Bourbons dwelt here for some time at the early part of the present century. But the last in lineal descent of the Tilneys—the rich heiress, Miss Tilney Long—married the Hon. W. T. Long Pole Wellesley, afterwards Earl of Mornington, whose son, the present earl, is now lord of the manor, and the consequences of that unhappy marriage involved the demolition of the noble pile. The unfortunate lady lived to see the heirlooms of her family in the grasp of creditors, the magnificent furniture carried off by the highest bidder, and, in 1823, even her home pulled down and the materials lotted out for sale. As we look upon the mansionless park—for all that remains is the steward's house—the overgrown walks, and once almost elysian pleasure grounds, now let out for pasturage, we cannot but sigh over this sad page of patrician history.

But though Wansted House has disappeared, another noble pile has risen up in the parish, with its walls laid on more hallowed, and we may hope on more permanent, foundations. Near Snarebrook stands the Infant Orphan Asylum, an extensive building with projecting wings, in the Elizabethan style, the first stone of which was laid by his Royal Highness Prince Albert on the 24th of July, 1841. It is more especially intended for the children of those who have been in respectable circumstances, but is open to all orphans whose parents never received parochial aid; and here at the present time, under royal patronage, and supported by noble subscriptions, hundreds of little ones find happy shelter, who would otherwise have been left drifting about the highways and byeways of a bleak world.

The church of Wansted, which stands within the park, was rebuilt at the close of the last century. It contains an elegant monument to Sir Josiah Child, Bart., who died in 1699. The National School of the parish is endowed with £500. stock left by George Bowles, Esq., in 1817, and £170. donations of the inhabitants. The poor have £1. a year from Rampston's charity; the dividends of £100. stock, given by Earl Tilney; of £166. 13s. 4d. purchased with William Plomer's gift; £37. 10s. given by Mrs. Waldo, in 1803; and £500. stock, left by George Bowles, in 1817.

## Ongar Hundred.

This Hundred extends from that of Dunmow on the north to Havering on the south, a distance of about 14 miles; but in breadth—from Waltham on the west, to the verge of the Hundreds of Chelmsford, Chafford and Barstable, which it skirts on the east—it narrows in parts to about seven miles. It contains the following 26 parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.			
					Rectorial.		Vicarial.	
Ongar Chipping {	The Saxon word <i>Aungre</i> , the {	508	843	£ 3850	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	
Ongar High ... {	place, or <i>hangre</i> , the hill ... {	4510	1147	7108	1382	2 5		
Chigwell .....	King's-well—a celebrated well ...	4522	1965	12424	900	0 0	500	0 0
Fyfield .....	The Saxon word <i>ff</i> , five, and {	2450	598	3648	741	0 0		
Greenstead .....	<i>hyde</i> ,—a quantity of land ... {	1498	136	1091	200	0 0		
Kelvedon Hatch {	Green-place .....	1665	502	2528	488	0 0		
Lambourne..... {	Cold hill, and a hatch gate at {	2440	842	4350	610	0 0		
High Laver .... {	the forest .....	1894	534	2559	520	0 0		
Little Laver ... {	<i>Lam</i> , and <i>burn</i> , a brook—dirty {	968	119	1256	260	0 0		
Magdalen Laver {	brook.....	1228	236	1685	310	0 0		
Loughton .....	The Saxon words <i>Laga</i> and {	3170	1237	6406	458	0 0		
Moreton .....	<i>fare</i> —anciently called <i>Laga</i> - {	1421	544	2179	390	0 0		
Navestock .....	<i>fare</i> .....	4329	982	6639	574	0 0		
Bobbingworth {	<i>Loo</i> , an enclosure, and <i>dun</i> , a {	1628	341	2229	395	0 0		
North Weald .....	village .....	3377	842	5256	431	10 0	451	10 0
Norton Mandeville .....	<i>More</i> , a rising ground, and <i>dun</i> , {	757	135	956	163	0 0		
Abbess Roothing {	a village or farm .....	1602	216	1697	450	0 0		
Beauch. Roothing {	The Saxon <i>Napis</i> , and <i>stocke</i> , {	1811	250	1673	270	0 0		
Shelley .....	felled timber .....	600	215	1105	180	0 0		
Stanford Rivers {	The name of an owner, and a {	4386	1082	6498	1020	0 0		
Staple. Abbots. {	hall or farm .....	2331	492	3353	536	0 0		
Staple. Tawney {	North-wood .....	1633	333	2381	700	0 0		
Stondon Massey {	Its northern situation, and {	1120	268	1781	355	10 0		
Thoydon Bois... {	Mandeville, the owner .....	2176	591	2611			1106	0 0
Thoydon Garnon {	The Roden, and belonging to {	3181	1237	5094	650	0 0		
Thoydon Mount {	The Roden, Beauchamp the owner {	1500	194	2025				
	The Saxon word <i>Scell</i> , pleasant, {							
	and <i>ley</i> , a pasture .....							
	A ford over the Roden, paved {							
	with stone.....							
	Stepples or piles over the river, {							
	and ancient owners.....							
	A stony hill and the Marci {							
	family .....							
	Thegn's-hill—the lordship of {							
	a Saxon Thane.....							

The Hundred is exceedingly pleasant, being finely undulated, and touching at several points upon the forest. Of the part towards Epping, it was written, a hundred years ago, “It may with propriety be called the garden of Essex, from the pleasing variety of the hills and vales, the fertility of the soil, the goodness of the roads, the neatness of the buildings, and the many additional ornaments it receives from the number of noblemen's and gentlemen's seats with which it abounds; insomuch that a traveller cannot pass through this part of the county without being struck with the peculiarity of its beauty, and the variety of noble and pleasing prospects, which in different

\* This includes the tithes of Thoydon Mount, the two being incorporated.

+ Besides this, Marks' Hall, Margaret Roothing, pays tithes to the rector of Stondon Massey, commuted at £30. 10s. 6d.

‡ This is the annual value: Norton Mandeville is a perpetual curacy.

parts present themselves to his view." In this, and some of the neighbouring Hundreds, various estates were held by the tenure of "attending the wardstaff," a curious old ceremony, intended, as far as we can judge from the allusion to it in records, to secure an annual muster and brief training of the men upon whom devolved certain duties at a time when the preservation of the peace and the protection of property were left very much in the people's own keeping. A description of this proceeding has been preserved in a manuscript account of the rents of the Hundred, at the time they were granted to John Stoner, of Loughton, in the reign of Henry VIII. It is there described as having been observed—"not only in the time of King Edward III. and Robert Bruce, sometime King of Scots, but also in the time of his noble progenitors, kings of England, long before which the Saxons inhabited this realm, as manifestly may appear more at large by ancient records thereof made by Humphrey de Bohun, the Earl of Hereford and Essex, and Constable of England, lord of the said Hundred, dated at Pleshy, the 10th day of July, in the 11th year of the reign of the same King Edward, as also by divers other ancient records, written in the Saxon tongue." This record is headed as follows:—

*"Aungr Hundr.—The order of the gathering and yearly making of the ward-staff of the King there, with the due course and circumstance of the yearly watch, ward, and service royall incident to the same."*

It is there provided that the bailiff of the Liberty or Hundred should make the wardstaff of a willow bough growing in Abbess Roothing wood, the Sunday before Hock Monday, and it was to be three quarters of a yard long and eight inches round. He then took it to Ruckwood Hall, where the lord reverently received it, rolled it in a fair fine linen cloth, and laid it on a pillow or cushion in the chief place of the Hall. Having partaken of refreshment, the bailiff conveyed the staff by "sun-shining" to Ward-hatch Lane, where the lord of Ruckwood, and the tenants and landowners liable to the duty, were compelled to attend, "with their full ordinary number of able men, well harnessed, with sufficient weapons." A rope was then drawn across the road to stop the traffic, a bell hung to it, and the staff was laid down reverently on a pillow or cushion on the ground. The names were then called, and proclamation made, "to watch and keep the ward in due silence, so that the king be harmless and the county scapeless, until the sun arising." After the night's watch, the lord cut a notch on the staff to show the service done; and after reciting some old Saxon rhymes, the bar was hauled up, and they departed. The staff was then passed on to Fyfield, High Ongar, Navestock, Stapleford Abbots, Lambourne, Chigwell, Thoydon Garnon, Moreton, and Magdalen Laver, where the same ceremony and watch were observed. The owners of some lands were bound to send two men to watch the ward-staff; some had to keep it, and others were to pay ward-silver. The staff was to be "carried through the towns and hundreds of Essex, as far as a place called Atte-wode, near the sea, and be thrown there into the sea." Ridiculous as the matter now appears, it must be recollected that it had its uses in ancient days, and served a substantial purpose,—something in the nature of the muster of our militia at the present time.

CHIPPING ONGAR is a neat and pleasant little town—the ancient market town of the district—and though its population is only that of a moderate village, it is, from its name, population, and antiquity, the



capital of the Hundred. That the Romans fixed upon Ongar as one of their military towns or stations is beyond doubt. The foundations of Roman buildings have been discovered at various points, particularly about the churchyard. Roman bricks have been largely used in the construction of the sacred edifice. There is good reason to conclude that in the earliest ages there were large defensive works here, and that entrenchments encircled the site of the present town. This is explained and confirmed by the fact that a Roman road, either to Braintree, or in the direction of the camp at Walbury, passed in this direction; and it was natural that the imperial conquerors should seize upon, fortify, and people this picturesque spot, to protect themselves and secure their communications, when the painted bodies and the rude weapons of hordes of half-subdued Britons were seen hovering in the surrounding forest. In Saxon times the lordship belonged to Ailid, a freeman; and it was probably in that early age a market-town, as the addition of Chipping is derived from the Saxon word "ceaping," meaning buying; and the market was anciently held on Tuesdays, though now, having dwindled down to a few pedlars' stalls, it has been transferred to Saturday. On the accession of the Normans, Ongar fell into the hands of the Earl of Boulogne; and his grand-daughter having carried it in marriage to Stephen, Earl of Blois, afterwards King, it was granted by the son of that monarch, with other property in the neighbourhood, to Lord Richard De Lucy, who had so gallantly defended Valais against the Duke of Anjou, and afterwards became Lord Justice of England, and Lieutenant of the kingdom whilst the King was in Normandy. For him the lordship was erected into an Honor, with ten knights' fees dependent upon it; and fast by the town, on the summit of yonder mount to the south, at the back of the farm-house now occupied by Mr. Coe, and near which the inhabitant takes his summer morning's walk in simple quietude, was reared one of those grim old feudal castles which secured the power of the nobles and held the people in serfdom and slavery. The mount is artificial, seemingly a part of a still more ancient fortification; and when this spot was covered with thick ribbed walls, keep, watch-tower, and battlement, was a position of great strength in the warfare of that day. Lord De Lucy from this time became one of the great men of Essex. He was sheriff in 1156; but he appears to have become disgusted with the power and pomp of the world, and having founded the priory of Lesnes, in Kent, he entered himself as a monk, and died there in 1179. The lordship afterwards passed to the Earls of Stafford, and having been often sold, it was purchased in 1717 by Edward Alexander, Esq., from whom it has descended to its present owner, C. Alexander Bennett, Esq. The castle, deserted and left desolate, was a ruin in the time of Queen Elizabeth, when William Morrice, Esq., the then owner, cleared away the crumbling walls, and erected on the hill-top a brick building, three stories high, which, it is recorded, by reason of its lofty structure, prospects, beauty, and pleasant walks, exceeded any place in this county. This also fell into decay, and in 1744, William Alexander, Esq., substituted for it a large embattled summer house, reached by a walk winding round the mount, and arched over with trees. A corner of the crumbling wall of this building now crowns the lofty summit, but the mount itself is isolated by the deep water of the broad moat which still surrounds it. A paddock of four or five acres, to the north-west of the mount, was the castle-yard, and a high earth wall, several yards thick at the top, and protected on the



outer side by a moat, still encircles it, except on the spot where the farm-house now stands, and which seems to have been the entrance to the fortress. These earthworks are overgrown with underwood and elm trees, of which we found a colony of rooks had taken possession, and, like the sentinel of old at postern or on tower, gave timely alarm at the approach of a stranger.

Rather more than three centuries ago (1542) Chipping Ongar was, by act of parliament, abolished as a parish, and laid to that of Greensted. The act recited that "the profits of the church of Cheping Ongar were not sufficient to find a priest, not being above £6. in the king's books;" and, as the church of Greensted "stood but a quarter of a mile distant from it, and commodious for the access of the parishioners of Ongar," it was enacted "that the church of Cheping Ongar should be dissolved, and the church of Greensted made the parish church, as well for the parishioners of Ongar as those of Greensted." This, however, was set aside six years after, and Ongar was restored to the dignity of a distinct parish by another act passed in 1554, the preamble of which recites:—"That one William Morris, Esq., then patron of the church of Cheping Ongar, and member of parliament, did by sinister labour and procurement, get the act for the consolidation."

The church is an ancient structure, as the style and Roman tiles indicate. It is the resting-place of one of the daughters of Lord Oliver Cromwell. She lies within the communion rails, and over her, upon the floor, is a black marble slab, with a Latin inscription, of which the following is a translation:—

"Here lies Jane, daughter of Lord Oliver Cromwell, of Finchingbrooke, in Huntingdonshire, Knight of the Bath. She was wife of Tobias Pallanquine, Esq., of the illustrious family of that name in Cambridgeshire. Having almost arrived at the forty-third year of her age, and having finished her duty as well as her life, she deposited her mortal part in this dust, on the 23rd of March, and in the year of Christ, 1637."

Close by her side is the grave of one of her husband's relations, with the inscription:—

"Here lies the body of that truly noble and religious gentleman, Horatio Pallanquine, Esq., who died May 6th, 1648, aged 36."

The charities consist of five houses at the north end of the town, left by Joseph King, in 1698, the rents to be applied in schooling and apprenticing poor children; they are expended for educational purposes, books, and apprentice fees. For distribution in bread, Mrs. Septane Mitchell left the dividends of £50. stock, in 1706.

HIGH ONGAR, or Old Ongar, as it has been sometimes called, may almost be looked upon as a part or suburb of Chipping Ongar, from which it is separated by the Roden, though it is much the larger parish of the two. Forest Hall, a good mansion a mile north of the village, is the seat of the Rev. J. Bramston Stane, who is lord of this manor, of Newarks, and Wetherspane, these estates having been purchased of Lord Rich in 1562 for the Stane family, which ever since has been settled here; the mansion was built by Richard Stane, Esq., at the close of the 17th century. The Earl of Mornington owns the manor of Passelow; and Ashe Hall belongs to the Rev. J. H. Earle. Ongar Park, four miles distant, which is completely cut off from the parish but still forms a part of it, is held by Capel Cure, Esq. The farm of Asteylyns is the property of the College of Physicians, having been settled upon that institution by Dr. Hamey, in 1672. It was formerly a park, with a noble old moated mansion,

in which the Duke of Norfolk found shelter and concealment when Queen Elizabeth sought his head for the presumptuous attempt to secure the hand of Mary, Queen of Scots.

In the church are some fine monuments to the Stane family ; and on a black marble stone is the following curious inscription on one who appears to have been an actor in or sufferer from Puritan domination in the days of the commonwealth—

“When a general confusion, ushered in by a pretended Reformation, had buried the Protestant Religion and the Liberty of the Subject under the Ruins of Church and State, he left a sad and serious warning to all posterity how they opposed the king and bishops again ; then was this house of bondage happily changed for an heavenly Canaan by Richard Carter, October 26, 1659.”

There are six almshouses in the parish, built by the Rev. Dr. Tabor, and endowed, in 1610, with a rent-charge of £10. out of Curry-farm, Bradwell. For eight poor widows Alice Thomlinson left a rent-charge of £2. out of a farm at Hatfield Broad Oak ; for distribution in bread, John Wyberd left a rent-charge of £2. 10s. out of a house at Kirton ; William Peacocke, £1. out of King's Ridden cottage ; and Mr. Waller, 10s. out of Farrows farm ; for distribution of Bibles and prayer books Dr. Waller left 10s. a year out of Thrift farm.

GREENSTED HALL, THE SEAT OF CAPTAIN BUDWORTH.—To the west of Chipping Ongar, reached by a walk of about a mile through pleasant meadows, and nestling amongst clumps of trees, as if it still stood in the forest land, is the curious little antique church of Greensted—St. Edmund's shrine, already described (page 31.) There is little doubt that this is the identical resting-place of the saint, as the register of the Abbey of St. Edmund says,—“His body was likewise entertained at Aungre, where a wooden chapel erected to his memory remains to the present day.” Close by is the Hall, commanding prospects over a rich forestal district. The parish belonged, with Ongar, to Sir Richard Lucy ; and subsequently to the noble families of Stafford, Bouchier, and others. The manor, with the remainder of the parish, and other property in the neighbourhood, was purchased in the reign of Charles II. by Alexander Cleeve, of London, merchant. Subsequently these estates were subdivided between three of his granddaughters, one of whom marrying the Rev. Richard Budworth during the last century, carried a portion of this parish to her husband ; the manor and Hall, however, passing successively through the hands of the Rebotier, Redman, and Ord families. In 1837 the trustees of the estate of the Rev. Philip Budworth, (son of the above Richard Budworth) re-purchased Greensted Hall with the manor, and with one or two small exceptions, the remainder of the parish. Greensted Hall is now the seat of Captain Philip John Budworth, son of the last mentioned, who has lately restored the mansion—a large pile of buildings dating from the reign of Elizabeth, but, owing to successive repairs and alterations, possessing no architectural remains of that epoch. The entrance hall, however, is a noble and spacious one, and contains a fine Scarsellino, brought by Captain Budworth from the Sciana Gallery at Rome, as well as a collection of arms and armour, which was partly made by him in the East. From the Hall, eastwards, a fine avenue of elms, of nearly a mile in length, runs through the grounds and adjoining fields into the town of Ongar.

The charities for the poor are two rent-charges of 5s. out of land at Stanford Rivers, left by Robert Petit ; and £2. out of Lee-fields, left by Richard Bourne, in 1660.

To the north of the high road leading from Chelmsford to Epping, extends a rich tract, comprising nearly half the Hundred, abounding with rural scenery, but with few mansions of note, remnants of antiquity, or historical reminiscences, calling for popular record.

Below High Ongar, in the direction of Chelmsford, is the little parish of NORTON MANDEVILLE, with a village straggling round a heath a mile from the church—a small edifice, which in Roman Catholic times was appropriated to the nunnery of St. Leonard's, at Bromley, and seems to have been a chapel of ease to High Ongar. The manor of Norton Mandeville in 1181 belonged to the canons of St. Paul's, but was purchased in 1480 by Merton College, Oxford, its present owners, with money given by Thomas Kempe, Bishop of London, to find the Fellows in liveries. The other manor of Newarks Norton belongs to the Rev. J. B. Stane. Adjacent, on the boundary of the Hundred at this point, lies FYFIELD, a neat village in the vale of the Roding. At the Norman survey the parish belonged to the great Earl of Boulogne and John Waleran; the chief manor of the Hall is now owned by the Earl of Mornington. Its church bears marks of having been of some importance in ancient times. The tower, which stood cathedral-wise, in the centre, fell many years ago, and was rebuilt of wood. The antique stone carvings in the east window; three fine arches rising above each other on the south wall, supported by columns of grey marble; and the large size of the building, lead to the conclusion that the monastery of Bermondsey, which possessed it in 1094, or the ancient family of De Tany, who held property here, took part in raising and decorating, with the architectural tastes of that day, the temple of a town of more extent and importance in old times than we find it at present.\* Away to the right lie BEAUCHAMP and ABBESS ROTHINGS (already noticed); † and upon the left, on the road from Ongar to Epping, is SHELLEY, with nothing to arrest our steps save Brundish Hall, a mansion formerly of some magnificence, but now dwindled to a little farm-house, with its moat still about it. In its church, which was built in 1811, after the old one had lain eleven years in ruins, is the following epitaph:—

"Here lyeth buried the bodye of John Greene, beinge of the age of 89, and had issue of his body by Katharyn his wyffe, daughter of John Wright, children vi teene, and the issue of their two bodyes weare one hundred and a lewen in there lyves tyme; which John deceased the xviith of November, 1595, and the sayde Katharyn deceased the first day of January, being of the age of 71 yeares."

This was a snug family party to gather round the social table at Christmas tide; but Mr. Green was so well-to-do in the world that he had no occasion to stint their fare, as tradition records that seven of his children were sons, and to each of them he gave a goodly manor. The charities for the poor are the dividends £110. 5s. 2d. stock, left by Harvey Kimpton in 1817, and of £333. 6s. 8d. left by William Bullock in 1822.

\* There is a free-school in the parish, built in 1819, Dr. A. Walker having in 1687 left a farm of 50a. 2r. 32p. in High Ongar, for that purpose and distributions of bread and Bibles; he also left two houses and gardens for residences for the parish clerk and the schoolmaster. The poor have the rent of eight acres of land at Moreton left by John Collins in 1751, for distribution of one shilling a week in bread and the rest at Christmas. There are also three houses and two pieces of land, and rent-charges of 6s. 5d. from unknown donors.

† The parish clerk of Abbess has forty shillings a year out of Fawkeners, left by N. Burton in 1678.

**BLAKE HALL, THE SEAT OF CAPEL CURE, Esq.**—**BOBBINGWORTH** is situated to the west of Shelley, with its lands lying in picturesque hills and vallies, and watered by a small brook called the Cripsey, which flows towards the Roden. Bobbingworth Hall was in 1484 in the Writell family, of considerable standing and influence in the county; it was afterwards in the Houblons; but it has now passed, with Blake Hall, anciently held of the house of Clare, to Capel Cure, Esq. It is a good mansion, with fine avenues and grounds, and from its position commands extensive prospects. — Cure, Esq., the father of the present proprietor, acquired considerable property in business, and purchased, about the year 1810, the manor of Blake Hall. Since that time the estate has been largely added to by purchases in Bobbingworth and several of the adjoining parishes. The present possessor, about the year 1840, made considerable architectural improvements to the house by the addition of a wing containing several handsome apartments.

To provide clothing for the aged poor, Robert Bourne, in 1663, left a cottage and four acres of land.

Pursuing our tour through this quarter of the Hundred, we pass **MORETON**, within whose boundary once stood the noble mansion of Nether Hall, one of the seats of the Lords Bouchiers in the 14th century, but which long since disappeared from chimney-top to foundation stone, and even the spot on which it stood has become a matter of doubtful tradition. It appears, by pleas of the crown, at Chelmsford, in the 13th of Edward I., that the manor of the parish "was held of the king *in capite* by the serjeantry of finding one man with a horse of 10s. price, and four horse-shoes, a leather sack, and one iron fastening, whenever the king should happen to go into Wales, at his own charge, viz., the tenant's, for forty days." The manor of Nether Hall now belongs to W. H. Algar, Esq., and Lady Hall to the Right Hon. J. H. Frere.\* Beyond this parish are the Lavers. **MAE-DALEN LAVER**, in 1664, belonged to Captain Aylett, who did and dared so much in the service of King Charles I., being one of the warriors who defended Colchester: at the close of the struggle he found himself with a barren addition to his coat of arms, conferred upon him by the king at Oxford, but stripped of his patrimonial estates, and even compelled to purchase his life of the parliamentarians for £460. A century ago the plough turned up in the parish a stone coffin, and a quantity of human bones; but not a vestige of a building has been found near the spot, nor anything to show whether this was the olden cemetery where "the rude forefathers of the hamlet slept," or the solitary resting place of some lord of the soil who had slumbered so long beneath it that his name had perished from the surface. **HIGH LAVER** has for the literary pilgrim considerable interest, as once the residence and now the resting place of John Locke. The mansion house of Otes, which the celebrated philosopher, as the guest of Sir Francis and Lady Masham, made his home for the last ten years of his life, has been demolished; the walks in which he wandered, nurturing and trimming and training the deep metaphysical

\* There is a charity school in Moreton, founded by the Rev. — Wilson, a late rector, who in 1822 bequeathed £400. stock, and £23. 4s. out of the Rectory for the purpose. The same donor bequeathed £300. stock, the dividends to be applied in the distribution of clothing to the poor; £300. stock for the parish clerk, and £100. for the bandle. The poor have a rent-charge of £5. out of a house and land left by Jonathan Carter, in 1699; and the dividends of £200. stock, left by Aun Brecknock, in 1804, subject to the repair of her monument.

thoughts which blossom in his works—several of which he published while a dweller here—are broken up or overgrown; and the only memorial we find of him is a black marble stone, beneath which he sleeps, on the south side of the church-yard. The following epitaph from his own hand appears on the wall above :—

“Stop, traveller. Near this place lieth John Locke. If you ask what kind of man he was, he answers that he lived content with his own small fortune. Bred a scholar, he made his learning subservient to the cause of truth. This thou wilt learn from his writings, which will show thee everything concerning him with greater truth than the suspected praises of an epitaph. His virtues indeed, if he had any, were too little for him to propose as matter of praise to himself, or as an example to thee. Let his vices be buried together. As to an example of manners, if you seek that you will have it in the Gospel; of vices I wish you may have one nowhere; of mortality, certainly (and may it profit thee) you have one here and everywhere. This stone, which will itself perish in a short time, records that he was born August 29, in the year of our Lord 1632; that he died October 28, in the year of our Lord 1704.”

The Messrs. Inkersole, farmers of the parish, are now lords of the manor of Otes.—J. M. Wilson, Esq., owns the manorial rights of **LITTLE LAVER**, which was not reckoned as a separate parish till after the Conquest.

Passing on towards Epping, we enter **NORTH WEALD BASSETT**, a considerable parish, including the hamlets of Haslingwood and Thornwood, lying in the Hundred of Harlow. Lady Puller owns the chief manor; but Cawnes belongs to Merton College, Oxford, and Marshalls to J. A. Houblon, Esq. Weald Hall, a farm-house, was in old times owned by the earls of Norfolk, the Plantagenets, and other noble families. It was then a place of considerable state, with its large park around, and its free chapel attached to it. The little church is an ancient structure; and Fuller, in his “Worthies,” gives a brief memoir of the Rev. Mr. Lynch, one of its former vicars, who might have sat as a model for the Man of Ross :—

“Remote from towns, he ran his goodly race,  
Nor e’er had changed, nor wished to change, his place.”

“He was memorable,” says the quaint old historian, “on many accounts. He was born at Staple, in Kent, in December, 1562; instituted to this living the 3rd of August, 1592; and enjoyed it till the 24th of May, 1656, nearly 64 years. He died at the age of 94, having lived 61 years with Elizabeth Seane, his wife, by whom he had 10 children, and yet so good a manager was he that he provided well for them. Bishop Aylmer, his kinsman, gave him this living, then not worth £50. a year, and pleasantly said to him ‘Cousine, play with this awhile till a better come.’” The Bishop afterwards offered him South Weald, three times better than this; to whom Mr. Lynch answered, with a pun, “that he preferred the weal of his parishioners’ souls before any other Weal whatsoever.”

There is a class of free scholars in the National school, Simon Thorogood having, in 1650, left £50. for building a school, which he endowed with a yearly rent of £10. out of Hartgroves, Barking. The dividends of £372. 15s. stock, left by Anna Manning Burrell, in 1809, are given yearly in equal shares to four poor widows; and the value of 36 bushels of barley, a charge on six acres of land belonging to the impropriate rectory, is distributed amongst the poor.

We must now consider ourselves as returned to Ongar; and, commencing our pilgrimage to the southward, we pass a little to the left the parish of **STONDON**—not mentioned in Domesday Book, and supposed to have been then incorporated with Ongar or Margaret



Boothing, in which latter parish, though eight or nine miles distant, the rector still receives the tithes of the manor of Marks, so called from its ancient owners, the Marci family. Stondon Place, pleasantly situated, is the residence of the lord of the manor.

**KELVEDON HALL, THE SEAT OF J. F. WRIGHT, ESQ.**—Proceeding onward, we enter the parish of Kelvedon Hatch. Glancing at its village homes scattered around a green, or at Boyers, first built by Thomas Bryce, a good citizen-mercier in 1498, and long the residence of the Misses Dolby, we look around for the mansion of Great Miles, which stood in the lowlands, watered by the Roden, and was once the seat of the Luther family, which gave sheriffs and members of parliament to the county in the last century. The house is gone; the name of Luther has died out; and the manor now belongs to J. Fane, Esq. We then turn towards the church, and near the sacred edifice we find the Hall, the seat of J. F. Wright, Esq. The manor of St. Germans, which forms the domain, was given in Saxon times to the Abbey of St. Peter's at Westminster, and the abbot and monks continued the lords paramount of it till 1532. From the records of the estate the occupants and the tenures by which the estate was held appear rather confused during this period; but it is clear that the Wright family became possessed of it between 1524 and 1544, as in the first-named year Henry Torrell, Esq. is found holding it of John Bolles, Esq.; and twenty years after his son is described as having held it of John Wright, Esq. In 1547 John Wright, gentleman, was presented to the living, the rectory being then appendant to the manor; and from that day to the present, a period of more than 300 years, there has not been wanting a John Wright, in the direct line, to represent the family at Kelvedon Hatch. The present Hall was built at the close of the seventeenth century by John Wright, Esq. (the seventh), who succeeded to the estate in 1691. It is a neat mansion standing in a small but pleasant park.

In the plain little church are many memorials to the Wright and Luther families; amongst the inscriptions are the following;—

"Ann, wife of John Wright, lord of this manor and patron of this church. She was daughter of Sir Edward Sulliard, of Flemings, in this county, knt. She died Nov. 28, 1617."

"Fratres in Unum.—Here lie Richard and Anthonie Luther, Esqrs., so truly loving Brothers that they lived neare fortie yeares joynte howskeepers together at Miles without anie Accompt betwixt them."

The poor have £2. 17s. 6d. from Jane Luther's charity; the rent of four tenements and five acres of land, left by the same lady; and £2. 10s. a year from land given by an unknown donor.

**NAVESTOCK.**—The **WALDEGRAVE FAMILY.**—Navestock runs from Kelvedon Hatch up to the boundaries of Havering, and is about 25 miles in circumference, extending in one part along the picturesque vale of the Roden, and in others over lands which, though in general well cultivated, have still something of the air of the forest about them. The whole is part of the patrimony of the Earls of Waldegrave, who until fifty years ago dwelt at the Hall, a large brick mansion erected about 1729, but deserted by the family and demolished in 1811. A great part of the gardens and pleasure grounds were delivered over to the cowherd, and the park was converted into a farm. The family of Waldegrave is one of the oldest, perhaps the oldest, in the land. It was well rooted in the English soil before the Norman conquerer came. Even the name is stated to have been derived from German words, implying "Men in power and authority"—something of the tenor



in which "landgrave" is now used ; and in Saxon times times they were seated in Northamptonshire, where they gave name to the parish of Waldegrave. Either they opposed the Norman, or their wealth was too tempting for the tough consciences of the new comers. Their estates were seized, and they were sent forth landless. The bright eye of a fair daughter of the house, however, smote one of the conquering knights, and by the regular process of old romance, the family was restored to its privileges and position. The tale of love is thus bluntly told by an old historian :—John De Waldgrave lost his lands upon the Conqueror's invasion, but having an only daughter, and meeting with a namesake of his in William's service, who was come out of Germany, upon consulting together they discovered they were related, and the German promised the other to obtain a restitution of his lands, and a pardon from the Conqueror, if he would give him his daughter in marriage. This was accordingly agreed to by both parties, and faithfully executed. The love-offering appeased the powers, and the fugitives returned to their rightful halls.

Since that time different members of the family have at various periods filled places of public power and trust ; and the name is found in different epochs in the page of martial history. Warin, brother of the lady whose beauty expelled the Norman spoilers, was sheriff of London in 1205. Others were members of parliament five hundred years ago. Sir Richard Waldegrave, who was seated at Smallbridge, in Suffolk, was speaker of the House of Commons in 1382. Thomas, his great-grandson, was, for his gallantry, knighted on the battle-field of Towton, by Edward IV., in 1461 ; and from him descended the branch of the family which settled at Navestock. Edward Waldegrave, Esq., was an officer in the household of the Princess Mary, and having refused to obey the order of the king, and forbid the celebration of mass before her while she was residing at Copped Hall, Epping, he was committed to the Tower. This bold act, and its penalty, largely extended the family fortunes. When Mary came to the throne she rewarded the man who had suffered for her sake with grants of several manors, amongst them Chewton, in Somersetshire, advanced him to high office, and made him lieutenant of Waltham Forest. These favours marked him out for further privation after her death, when he was again committed to the Tower, and died there after three years' imprisonment. When the civil war broke out, Edward Waldegrave, though seventy years of age, was up and in active service for Charles I. ; and so gallantly did the old man bestir himself that the king created him a baronet, in 1643. He remained steady to the cause through all the dark days of royalty, although he lost two sons in the struggle, and sacrificed property to the amount of £50,000. Sir Henry Waldegrave married a natural daughter of James II., and was created Baron Waldegrave, of Chewton, in 1685 ; and his successor was advanced to the titles of Viscount Chewton and Earl Waldegrave in 1729, having served as ambassador to the Emperor of Germany and at the Court of France. His son was Governor of George II. ; and his son was master of the horse to the queen of that sovereign. Above the family vault, in the north side of the chancel of the church, is the following record of the two first earls :—

"Underneath this monument are the remains of the two first Earls of Waldegrave, father and son, both of the name of James ; both servants of that excellent Prince George the Second ; both by him created Knights of the most Noble Order of the Garter. James the father was employed in foreign embassies to the courts of Vienna and Versailles, by George the First and by George the Second ; and he did his court

and country honor and service, and was respected wherever his negotiations made him known. In his private capacity, the affability and benevolence of his dispositions, and the goodness of his understanding, made him beloved and esteemed throughout his life. The antiquity of his illustrious and noble family is equal to that of most that may be named in any country or time; and needs not to be here recited."

The charities for the poor consist of a house and yard at Brentwood, a cottage at Navestock, Heathfield meadow (4A. 0R. 3P.), Bunn's field (4A. 0R. 25P.), Pinksty field (2A. 3R. 9P.), and three pieces of meadow land (3A. 2R. 18P.), all left by John Green, in 1625, and distributed in clothing and fuel. Besides these the poor have a rent-charge of £1. out of Dycott's farm; two rent-charges out of the Red Lion Inn, Romford, £1. for the four oldest labouring men, and £2. for apprenticing a poor child; and the dividends of £275. stock, left by Elizabeth Prince, in 1796, for eight poor persons not receiving parish alms.

To the right, as we quit Navestock, filling up the space between that parish and Greensted, a fertile and picturesque district, lies STANFORD RIVERS, with its straggling village. There was anciently an extensive park here; and Belhouse was long a seat of a branch of the Petre family. Sir C. C. Smith and Capel Cure, Esq. are the chief owners of the parish. The poor have 5s. a year, left by Thomas Petit; an annuity of £2., left by William Green in 1554, has been lost.

LAMBOURNE, the adjacent parish, which includes the pleasant village of Abridge, was given by the Conqueror to the Earl of Bolougne. A large part of it at one period belonged to the Lords Fortescue; but most of the manorial rights have now fallen into the hands of W. J. Lockwood, Esq., who resides at Bishops Hall, the estates having been purchased in the last century by Richard Lockwood, Esq., a wealthy Turkey merchant. This mansion was long the property of the bishops of Norwich; and Henry Spencer, the celebrated soldier-prelate, who mustered a little army, and, by his tact and gallantry, did good service to the crown in Wat Tyler's rebellion, often resided in this quiet retreat, which, according to the necessity of that time, was fortified as a castle, with outworks extending into some of the neighbouring parishes. In the church are several rich stained glass windows, one of them in the chancel containing three pieces of fine old painting brought from Basle in 1817. The sacred edifice contains the tombs of the learned Dr. Thomas Tooke; of Dr. Wynwylf, Bishop of Lincoln, who died here in 1654, having, as his epitaph expresses it, "made this his mournful retirement in the worst of times." In the village of ABRIDGE is a neat chapel-of-ease, built by subscription in 1830. A house held by the churchwardens is occupied by paupers. The rent of four acres of land, also held by them; a rent-charge of 6s. 8d. left by — Barfoot out of Sym's Croft; and the rent of two acres of land in Thoydon parish, are applied to the service of the church. The poor have a rent-charge of ten shillings out of Prior's farm, left by — Broomfield.

Turning a little to the south, we enter STAPLEFORD ABBOTS, the greater part of which was held from 1010 till the reformation by the abbey at Bury St. Edmunds. The lord of that day, says a legend of the locality, was suffering from a languishing illness, but the body of St. Edmund resting in the manor-house on its way back to Bury, he suddenly recovered, and forthwith laid the estate, as an offering of gratitude, on the shrine of the dead saint. This manor of the Hall is now the property of J. Barnes, Esq.; Sir Henry Mildmay owns Batards; and Albys is the seat of T. N. Abdy, Esq. It is a fine and stately mansion, standing in a pleasant park, and is said to have been

built by Inigo Jones, though Walpole, in his "Lives of the Painters," questions this. It was completely restored and improved by Sir John Abdy, a century ago. The family of Abdy is of long standing in the county. It sprang from Roger Abdy, a London merchant, who was an alderman and one of the sheriffs in 1610. Three of his sons were created baronets, and one of them, Sir Thomas, settled at Felix Hall, Kelvedon. Anthony Abdy, Esq., purchased this estate of Albyns; and in a chapel on the north side of the ancient church is the vault of the family.

A free school was founded by Sir John Fortescue in 1734, and endowed with £25 a year out of Knoll's Hill, for twenty boys of this parish and twenty of Lambourne. The poor have a rent-charge of £3 out of Mitchell's, How Green, left by Eliza Watson in 1782, and the dividends of £166. 13s. 4d. stock, purchased with money left by the Rev. Dr. Gould in 1799.

CHIGWELL, on the southern point of the Hundred, is generally regarded as one of the sweetest villages in the county. It abounds in beautiful woodland scenery, extending in several parts along the verge of the forest; and from Chigwell Row, which forms a neat little village of itself, a fine view opens over the county up to Danbury church, the spire of which is distinctly visible, and along a great part of the Thames, backed by the rising hills of Kent. The parish is thickly studded with good mansions, most of them country residences of merchants and others of the metropolis; and there are several good old halls and manor houses, in which dwelt the ancient lords of the soil. Chigwell Hall, once part of the possessions of Earl Harold, is now the property of James Mills, Esq. Rolls, or Barringtons as it was formerly called—which was the residence of the late Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey, and for two centuries before of that family—belongs to Mr. Lloyd. Woolstons, or Wolvertons, which appears to have been once a separate parish, and to have been united to Chigwell since the conquest, is the seat of Robert Bodle, Esq.; and the Grange, which before the reformation was held by Tilty Abbey, is part of the endowment of Brentwood School. Lexborough, a mansion which in the last century was described as inferior to few in the county, is down. Chigwell, too, had once its royal palace, known as Poteles, or Longford Place, as ancient as any house in the forest, which was occasionally occupied by kings of old in their hunting excursions; and from hence have often gone forth royal guests and troops of courtiers to the chase in the neighbouring woodlands. It remained in the crown till the time of Elizabeth, when it was finally granted away, and has since passed through various hands. The ancient church, which is approached from the south by a thick archway of yews, is of interest as being the resting-place of one of our Essex worthies—Dr. Harsnett, Archbishop of York. He was the son of a baker in St. Botolph Street, Colchester; and probably at an early age, the eloquent preacher and the future prelate might be seen dealing out from his father's counter the bread which perisheth, his humble parents little imagining he was destined to wield the bishop's crozier instead of the baker's peel. He was born in 1561, and having acquired some learning, was sent to Cambridge, where he made great progress. In 1586 he was elected master of the free school at Colchester, which after a year he resigned, and in 1597 became vicar of this parish of Chigwell, for which locality, being, perhaps, his first ministerial charge, he ever after felt a peculiar

interest. Afterwards he became archdeacon of Essex; and, having had charge of various other parishes in the county, in 1609 he was made bishop of Chichester. On being translated to the see of Norwich, in 1619, he was fiercely assailed by the puritans, and was accused by the Commons of various misdemeanours. He triumphed over all, however, and in 1628 became archbishop of York. He died in 1631, and was buried in this church, where there is a large and beautifully engraved brass, with his full-length figure, and an inscription in Latin, from his own hand, of which the following is a translation:—

"Here lieth Samuel Harsnett, formerly vicar of this Church. First the unworthy Bishop of Chichester, then the more unworthy Bishop of Norwich, at last the very unworthy Archbishop of York, who died on the 25th day of May, in the year of our Lord, 1631. Which very epitaph that most reverend Prelate, out of his excessive humility, ordered by his will to be inscribed to his memory."

There are two good schools, founded by Archbishop Harsnett in 1629; one devoted to classical education, the other for English reading, writing, &c., for the boys of Chigwell, Loughton, Woodford, and Lambourne; it is under the control of a body of governors, and is endowed with the impropriate rectory of Tottington, Norfolk. In accordance with the founder's will, £10. 8s. is paid out of the funds for distribution in bread, £10. to the secretary, and £1. to the parish clerk. There are three almshouses, and the inmates have £4. a year out of Brockhouse Farm. The poor have £2. from Rampston's charity; the dividends of £132. stock, purchased with money left by Barbara Fisher, in 1809; and the dividends of £1,000. stock, left by James Hatch, in 1806, subject to the repair of his monument and vault at Ilford. Eight aged widows have the dividends of £900. stock, left by Mary Grainger; and Mary Fountain, in 1804, left the dividends of £93. 16s. 2d. for two blind women of this or any other parish.

LOUGHTON is a large and delightful parish, with a very picturesque village, and ground of a remarkably undulating character. The views and scenery in this village are equal to almost anything of the kind in this part of England, the former extending to the Thames and the Kentish hills in one direction, to Hampstead and Highgate in another, and to the immediate vicinity of Navestock, twelve miles off, on the eastern side. The walks in or near the forest are of such a character as to invite large parties of Londoners to fill numerous excursion trains to Loughton during the summer. W. Whitaker Maitland, Esq., is lord of the manor, the estate having been purchased in 1745 by William Whitaker, Esq., of London, of the Earl of Rochford, for £24,500.; and to this family that of Maitland afterwards became united by marriage. The Hall, a fine edifice of the Elizabethan style, was unfortunately burnt down in 1836. It is said to have been, in 1688, the residence of the Princess Anne of Denmark, afterwards Queen Anne, who retired thither before the revolution in that year. There are some other good family residences in the parish, as Debden Hall, Gouldings Hill, and the Warren. The health of the place is generally above the average, and the condition of the poor is much ameliorated by local charities, as well as by the general attention to their education, sanitary condition, and improvement. There seems, however, to be a want of energy, and an unwillingness to move from their native place, which greatly characterise the inhabitants, not only of this village, but of this part of the county generally, and which certainly impedes their advancement in the social scale. The proximity of the forest, and the pretext of procuring firewood by means of the loppings

of the trees, which the inhabitants claim a right to cut during the winter months, encourage habits of idleness and dislike of settled labour, and in some cases give occasion for poaching, all of which are injurious to the morals of the poor. Enclosures, however, seem to be commencing in the neighbourhood, which will probably check these irregular and, to a certain extent, demoralising tendencies.

The parish church, a handsome Norman building, stands nearly in the centre of the village. It was erected in 1846, at a cost of £6,000., raised by subscription, in lieu of the former church, which stood near the Hall, at an inconvenient distance for the inhabitants. It will accommodate about 500 persons, and is adorned with several painted windows by Wailes and others.

At High Beech, an elevated and forestal part of the parish, a handsome district church has been erected.

There are garden allotments of six acres for the poor, set apart for them on an enclosure of waste; the rent of the Poor's Piece, one acre, is distributed in bread, with £1. from Rampston's charity; and the poor have the dividends of £49. 17s. 3d. stock, left by Nicholas Pearse, in 1821. The dividends of £2,700. stock were left by Ann Whitaker, for the support of the Sunday-school, and distributions to the poor.

Adjacent to Loughton are the Thoydons. It is probable that in Saxon times these three parishes formed one district. Sir Roger De Gernon, who came over with William the Conqueror, settled in Thoydon Garnon, and his residence is still indicated by the moated farm of Garnish Hall. The church, close by, was near the centre of the whole district of the Three Thoydons, and both the churches of the other two Thoydons showed, by their size and structure, that they were subsequently erected for portions of the district separated from the mother church.

THOYDON BOIS lies between Loughton and Epping, with beautiful forest scenery in its waste lands. The church is a neat structure, erected in 1851, the original parish church having been situated at a considerable distance from the bulk of the population. It stood close to Thoydon Hall, which is said to have been formerly the property, and was certainly the abode, of Elwes, the celebrated miser. The village green, with its avenues of trees, presents a very pleasing picture. On the north-east, or forest side, the parish extends up to the back street of Epping town, including the residences called Thoydon Place and Langham Lodge, and a small collection of cottages.

The poor's land consists of an acre and a half, given by an unknown donor, and there is a rent-charge of £2. out of Thoydon Hall.

GAYNES PARK, the family seat of T. C. Chisenhale Marsh, Esq., one of the chairmen of the county sessions, stands in Thoydon Garnon, which adjoins the last-described parish on the east. It is a good mansion, standing in a park, with the grounds about it tastefully laid out; and for the beauty of its woodland scenery it is scarcely to be excelled amongst the houses of the Essex gentry. This estate appears to have been formed out of the forest in the reign of Henry III., 600 years ago, as Robert Garnon had licence from that monarch to enclose his wood at Taydon for a park, which gave name to the manor. About 1400 it was held by the baronial family of Wells; but becoming forfeited to the crown, it was given by Edward IV. to one of his daughters. It was long in the Fitzwilliams, afterwards passing to Sir Richard Wingfield, and then to the earls of Anglesea. The pro-



perty, with the manor of Hemnalls, came into the possession of the present family of Marsh, by purchase from the Marquis of Anglesea, at the latter end of the last century. The other manor of Thoydon Garnon, or Garnish Hall, was bought of Sir Thomas Neville Abdy, Bart., in 1857. An old manor-house of Gaynes Park had existed for centuries; but the present mansion is modern, chiefly built within the present century, about 500 yards higher up the park, the ancient house having entirely disappeared. The village is frequently called Coopersale, the vulgar tradition being that it was given in consequence of the celebrity acquired by the ale of the keeper of the Merry Fiddlers public-house, named Cooper. Whether this be true or not, there are mansions in the parish called Coopersale Hall, and Coopersale House. The latter is the residence of the Archer-Houblon family, by whose munificence a district church was erected and endowed in 1851, by the title of St. Alban's Coopersale, and also a handsome school house on the road leading from Epping. The mother church is a plain building, capable of containing 300 persons, with a fine brick tower of the 15th century. There are some monuments to members of the Archer, Abdy, Maggs, and other influential families, and a very fine brass to the memory of William Kyskeby, a rector, who died in 1458.

There is a hospital or almshouse in the parish, founded by Lady Fitzwilliam in 1602, for four poor widows, who have a rent-charge of £12. a year; the money received from Barker's charity (as noticed in Epping) is applied to the augmentation of this stipend, the schooling of poor girls, the aid of the Sunday school, and the distribution of meat and bread to the poor. The dividends of savings, and the share of timber in Redyn's wood, are devoted to apprenticing poor children. The poor have also the rent of a house and three acres of land at North Weald, left by Thurston Winstanley, in 1750; a rent-charge of £2. out of Coopersale House, left by Henry Archer; £2. out of the Grove estate, given by William Black, in 1798; and a share, with Epping, of twelve acres of land at Thoydon Mount, given by J. Reynolds, in 1647. Five cottages are occupied by paupers.

Part of Epping town, the Union-house, the Grove, the residence of J. C. Whitman, Esq., and Kendal Lodge, are situated in this parish.

**HILL-HALL, THE SEAT OF SIR WILLIAM BOWYER SMITH, BART.**—The third parish bearing the name of Thoydon, with the distinctive title of Mount, is united to that of Stapleford Tawney; and high in its midst stands the noble seat of the ancient family of Smijth. After climbing the hill top on which the mansion is erected, we enter a long avenue on the northern side of the park. As we traverse it, and when we reach the tasteful pleasure grounds and terrace, we look forth upon a beautiful forest scene, and realize the description, long since given, that "Hill-hall, in point of elegance and prospect, may be reckoned inferior to very few houses in this county." To the westward the finely-timbered park falls boldly to a deep wooded valley, beyond which the country gradually rises; and from this height we can see its cultivated lands sprinkled over with farm-houses and villages, with the thick dark mass of the forest in the distance forming a back-ground to the rural landscape. On the south and other sides extend views of equal sylvan beauty, which compel us to admire the taste of those who, even before the time of the Norman—for this was one of the lordships of Suene—planted their manor-house on this commanding spot. The present hall is one of those fine massive old mansions which combine



the solidity of the past with the elegancies of the present. It is a quadrangular building, with very thick and lofty walls, erected near the site of the ancient edifice, by the ancestor of the present possessor, in 1548. On the north, the appearance of the structure, with its arched entrance and large massive door, leaves an impression of its original gloomy strength; but the eastern side is in the decorated Grecian style; and the southern or terrace front has been modernized and changed in character since the Elizabethan architect first raised the pile. On entering the mansion, the visitor will be struck by the beauty and proportions of the great hall, which is adorned with some fine paintings, and decorated with specimens of ancient armour and arms wielded in the hand-to-hand combat on the olden battle-fields of the country. Along one side runs a handsome gallery, and in traversing it we glance with interest at a curious object which obstructs our path, very unlike anything belonging to the equestrians of the present time—the veritable saddle on which Queen Elizabeth rode while sojourning at Horham Hall, which was formerly, as we have already recorded, one of the seats of the Smijth family. The dining and drawings rooms, and the library, are large and lofty apartments; and upon their walls is the finest array of family portraits we have seen in the county. They form a pictorial history of the house of Smijth for the last three hundred years, mingled with paintings of royal and other personages with which it has been connected. Many are by the master-hands of their time. Amongst them are found portraits of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth; Sir Thomas Smijth, the founder of the family, and the nephew to whom he left the estate; Charles I.; the second Sir Thomas Smijth; Sir Edward Bowyer; the Black Prince; the present Lady Smijth (daughter of Sir Henry Meux); James I.; James Smijth, Esq. and his wife; Sir Edward Smijth and his Lady; Sir William Smijth, by Copley; Sir Edward Smijth, father of the present baronet; Joseph Windham, by Sir Godfrey Kneller; the Bishop of Salisbury, connected with the family in 1663; Sir Edward Smijth, by Sir Godfrey Kneller; Sir William Smijth (1777) by James Barry; and a host of others, interesting as specimens of art and curious as illustrating costumes of the different periods in which they were painted.

The family of Smijth is of great antiquity in the land. By some it is traced up to Edward the Black Prince, as descended from Sir Roger de Clarendon, his natural son. In Essex, however, it is of about three centuries standing. About 1480, this estate was in the Hampden family, under the title of Thoydon-at-the-Mount and Hill-hall. Sir John Hampden died in 1553, and his widow being jointured with this property, married Sir Thomas Smijth, knt., who bought the reversion of the estate, made it part of the family patrimony, and built the Hall. Sir Thomas, who was the son of John Smijth, Esq., of Saffron Walden, sheriff of Essex and Herts. in the reign of Henry VIII., was one of the most celebrated statesmen and accomplished scholars of his day, and the author of several learned works, amongst them "the English Commonwealth," which has been several times reprinted. He is described as a most excellent orator, mathematician, philosopher, and perfect in several of the modern languages. These qualities marked him out for public duties and distinctions. He was appointed secretary of state under Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth, was often employed in important foreign embassies and negotiations, and was made chancellor of the order of the garter. Essex, too,

was anxious to do him local honour, and twice elected him one of its knights in parliament. He died in 1577, leaving his name honourably stamped on our political and literary history. His epitaph, on a sumptuous tomb in the little village church, which stands within the park, contains this record of him—the original being in Latin—

“Sir Thomas Smijth, knight, lord of this manor, privy councillor and principal secretary of state to both King Edward VI. and to Queen Elizabeth, and then ambassador to the greatest kings, chancellor of the noble order of the garter, colonel of Ards and Southern Clonebey, in Ireland, honoured even when a youth with the highest title of the civil law, a most excellent orator, mathematician, and philosopher, very skilful in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Italian languages, a friend of the honest and ingenious man, singularly good, serviceable to many, hurtful to none, averse to revenge. In short, remarkable for his wisdom, piety and integrity, and in every part of life, whether sick or well, prepared for death. When he had completed the 65th year of his age, piously and sweetly slept in the Lord, at his seat of Mont-hall, on the 12th day of August, in the year of his salvation, 1577.—The glory of a short life makes a man famous when buried in the bowels of the earth. My life was blameless; if after my death you hurt my fame (wretch) the Almighty will punish thee for so doing.”

The family have ever since held a high position in the county. Several of its members distinguished themselves as soldiers; and one of them, a youth of fifteen, won for himself a reputation as a volunteer under Prince Rupert in the civil wars. The chancel of the church contains the monuments of many of them. Of Sir Thomas Smijth, the first baronet, we are told, in these funereal records, that—

“He lived 66 years with great reputation for loyalty to his prince and conformity to the church of England in apostate times, and served his king and country in chiefest places of trust and credit in the county.”

The present owner of Hill Hall is the eleventh baronet, the title being conferred on the family in 1661; and he bears the name of Bowyer prefixed to that of Smijth, the surname and arms of that family, in consequence of an intermarriage long previously, having been assumed by royal license in 1839.

In STAPLEFORD TAWNEY is Suttons, the seat of Sir Charles C. Smith, Bart. It is a large and delightful mansion, the head of a manor which appears to have been cut off from the Hall, now belonging to Sir William Bowyer Smijth, but long the property of the De Tanys, a family in ancient times of high repute and large possessions in the county. Sir C. Cunliffe Smith is descended from John Smith, Esq., a London merchant, who was created a baronet in 1804, and having married, as his second wife, the daughter of Sir Ellis Cunliffe, the two names have become united. The present occupant of Suttons, who has been high sheriff of the county, is the third baronet. Tawney Common is a rugged-looking place—though now mostly enclosed—with a few scattered cottages. In the parish is a school-house, erected in 1745, by Jane Luther, who left 5s. to the parish clerk, and £2. 17s. 6d. each to this parish and Kelyedon Hatch, for distribution in bread, out of an estate at Little Warley. The poor have also the rent of four acres of land, left by an unknown donor; and a rent-charge of £5. left by Thomas Luther, in 1718.

## Rochford Hundred.

The Hundred is bounded on three sides by water—on the south by the lower part of the Thames and the sea, eastward by the German ocean, and on the north by the river Crouch. It contains the following 24 parishes—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Rochford.....	<i>Roche</i> , a fish or river—and a ford	1855	1704	5519	585 0 0	
Barling .....	<i>Bar</i> , a bear, and <i>ing</i> , a meadow...	1258	227	2619	256 0 0	176 0 0
Canewdon .....	Canute's-hill .....	4071	702	7200		
Eastwood .....	Woods—east of Rayleigh .....	2962	631	4963	230 0 0	
South Fambridge.	The bridge over the Crouch .....	1234	96	1240	315 0 0	
Foulness Island {	The Saxon words meaning the } promontory of fowls .....	23505	640	8208	*41 9 4	
Hadleigh..... {	The Saxon word <i>head</i> , high; } and <i>ley</i> , pasture .....	2679	412	1907	450 0 0	
Hawkwell .....	Hawk, and a spring or well .....	1353	349	2092	290 0 0	
Hockley .....	<i>Hoc</i> , mallows, and <i>ley</i> , pasture...	4614	838	6425	938 0 0	312 0 0
Leigh .....	<i>Ley</i> , the pasture or place .....	2331	1870	2794	500 0 0	
Paglesham .....	Name of a Saxon owner— <i>ham</i> , } a farm or village .....	1328	491	3038	560 0 0	
Prittlewell .....	The Saxon word <i>pretty</i> ; <i>leah</i> , } place, and a well at the Priory }	11293	2462	11045	†1095 10 0	323 11 0
Rawreth .....	The name of a Saxon owner, and } <i>leath</i> .....	2377	416	3655	763 0 0	
Rayleigh..... {	<i>Rae</i> , a buck or wild goat, and } <i>ley</i> , a pasture .....	2873	1463	5632	950 0 0	
North Shoebury }	A fort shaped like a shoe .....	2131	192	2335	+165 4 4	
South Shoebury }		5150	158	1788	412 0 0	
Shopland.....	Unknown	1039	61	1892	‡	85 19 0
Southchurch ... {	The southern position of the } church .....	4405	455	3727	800 0 0	
Gt. Stambridge }	A stone bridge over the small } river .....	1670	392	3580	706 0 0	
Lt. Stambridge }		600	136	1669	175 7 0	
Sutton .....	The south-town .....	721	149	1200	275 0 0	
Gt. Wakering... }	The name of a Saxon owner, } and <i>ing</i> , a meadow .....	5484	905	4806	657 2 0	290 6 0
Lt. Wakering... }		5362	292	3213	257 8 0	
Ashington .....	<i>Asses</i> -hill .....	1165	99	1548	291 0 0	

\* The Lord of the Manor makes up the income of the minister to £300. The island pays £14. 11s. 3d. tithe rent-charge to the rector of Sutton, £1. to the rector of Little Stambridge; £30. 16s. 8d. to the rector of Rochford, and £2. to the vicar of Shopland.

† There is besides £45 from a farm at Eastwood.

‡ In addition there is £190. from Canvey Island, payable to J. B. Scrutton, Esq.

§ There is £100. rent-charge to Mr. T. Holt White, tithe on Butler's farm, and £145. to Mr. S. Benton, impropriate tithe on the rest of the parish.

The length of the Hundred from east to west varies from ten to seventeen miles; in width it is about seven miles. It is a rich wheat-growing district, with its lands in many places relieved by dark woods, and finely undulated; and there are marshes along the vale of the Crouch and the coast of the Thames and the ocean, where the population assumes a mixed agricultural and maritime character. Formerly the Hundred was regarded as a seed-bed of all kinds of aguish diseases; and this character still lingers about the islands formed by the windings of the rivers and creeks along the coast; but the progress of drainage and other agricultural improvements have removed this reproach from the mainland, and brought a healthier atmosphere, with increased fertility. In old times the care and custody of a Hundred brought substantial power and profit to noble and royal personages.

In 1280 the Earl of Oxford held this bailwick on condition that he should "at his own cost and charge keep the fences and lodges of the king's parks at Rayleigh, Hadleigh, and Thundersley, in repair." Three hundred years before this, and in the earliest record, we find it, and most of the land, in the possession of the great Baron Swene, the reputed Dane, who saved his estates by adroitly succumbing to the Norman.

ROCHFORD, now, as at the time of Domesday survey, the chief town of the Hundred, was part of the possessions of this powerful chieftain. It is evidently a town of very ancient date. Its position on a river which is navigable to Broom-hills, within a mile of the town, affording access to the sea, probably rendered it the scene of a very early settlement—a spot often overrun by the foot of the Dane; and its four short streets, with the appearance of the surrounding neighbourhood, give it the appearance of the remnant of an olden city. There is nothing, however, in written record, to justify the conclusion that it was ever more populous than at the present day. Lying in a corner of the county, out of the great lines of traffic, it depends chiefly on the local trade of the district; but it has nevertheless been greatly improved within the last quarter of a century. It was a market town as early as the reign of Henry III. (1247), the privilege of holding a market here being granted by that monarch to Guy De Rochford, together with the rights of wrecks at sea, tumbrel (or ducking-stool for the punishment of scolding women), and all the other appendages of a great manorial lord of those days. Its market, however, is now of little note, though it might be supposed to be admirably situate as the centre of a rich agricultural district, with carriage for its corn to the metropolis by water and rail; and a miserable old wooden market-house, erected in 1707, but now ruined and decayed, which encumbers the square, is the chief sign of its ancient right and dignity. The dilapidated incumbrance has recently been purchased by the parishioners, and is to be pulled down to improve the square. At the time of the Conqueror's survey, Alured, a Saxon, held the parish under Suene; and when the descendant of the great baron forfeited it by his cowardice, it passed, with the other estates, to the crown. Henry II. granted it to a descendant of Eustace, the Norman, who took the name of De Rochford. Subsequently it came to William De Bohun, Earl Rivers, the Earl of Ormond, and others; and in the sixteenth century its principal manor was in the possession of Thomas Boleyn, father of the fair and unfortunate Anne. As the traveller enters the town from the west, he passes the Lawn, the tasteful seat of A. Tawke, Esq., and entering a picturesque avenue of trees, planted by Earl Tilney, extending nearly a mile along the road, he sees on his right a red brick mansion, with its ancient gables and twisted chimnies, and its walls coloured by time and touched by decay. This was the early home of Queen Anne Boleyn. We know there are many who doubt this fact; but there is reason to conclude, from a comparison of dates, that in the days of her childhood her father occasionally dwelt at the Hall, which was then a pile of far greater dimensions than at present, and had an extensive park around it. These buildings are but a remnant of the ancient mansion—part only of one quadrangle, which has been converted into a farm house, and was spoiled a few years ago by the process of modernization. There are many places in Essex associated with the after-life of this royal lady—with her beauty, her bold ambition, her triumphs, and her sufferings, but none of them of more

interest than this antique house, in which she was cradled ; the grounds and gardens in which her young foot chased the butterfly ; the old church hard by, in which perhaps she first learned to lisp the prayers of a faith which her ripened beauty was destined to banish from the parochial altars. It was a scene that was likely to recur to her—as the unspotted joys of childhood will come back to us in the darkest hour—when the foul and awful indictment was hanging over her household, charging, amongst many other similar crimes, and in the words of that document, not long since brought to light—“ That the Lady Anne, Queen of England, having been wife of the king for the space of three years and more, she, the said Lady Anne, contemning the marriage so solemnized between her and the king, and having malice in her heart against the king, and following her frail and carnal lust (2 November, 27 Henry VIII.), procured and incited George Boleyn, knight, Lord Rochford, her own natural brother, to have illicit intercourse with her, and that the act was committed 5 November in the same year, against the commands of Almighty God, and all laws human and divine.” Lord Rochford perished with the queen on this accusation ; but the Hall estate passed to their sister Mary, and was carried by her marriage into the family of the Careys. In 1555 it was purchased by Lord Rich, who died at the Hall, 1666. In 1712 it was bought of Viscount Bolingbroke by Sir Richard Child, and from him, through Miss Tilney, it has descended to the present Earl of Mornington. There is another manor in the parish belonging to the Bristow family, and to this appertains the strange old custom of the Lawless Court, which appears at one period to have extended to Rayleigh. The history of this court was thus given by Morant a hundred years ago :—

“ It is a whimsical custom, of which the origin is unknown. It is kept at King's Hill, about half a mile north-east of the church, in the yard of a house there. Here the tenants kneel and do their homage. The time is the Wednesday morning next after Michaelmas Day, upon the first cock-crowing, without any kind of light but such as the heavens will afford. The steward of the court calleth such as are bound to appear, with as low a voice as possible, giving no notice when he goeth to execute his office ; howsoever, he that gives not an answer is deeply amerced. They are all to whisper to each other. Nor have they any pen and ink, but supply that office with a coal ; and he that owes suit and service thereto, and appears not, forfeits to the lord double his rent every hour he is absent. A tenant of this manor forfeited, not long ago, his land for non-attendance, but was restored to it, the lord only taking a fine. The court is called lawless, because held at an unlawful or lawless hour, or *quia dicta sine lege*. There is a tradition that this servile attendance was imposed at first upon certain tenants of divers manors hereabouts for conspiring in this place at such an unseasonable time, to raise a commotion.”

At present there are no copyholds belonging to the estate —no rolls, at least of modern date. There are many free rents ; and a court, or rather meeting, is held yearly, on the first week in October, not in the darkness at the dreary hill, but in one of the comfortable inns of Rochford, at which the tenants paying rents, and some of the inhabitants, are invited to a supper. It is called the “ Cock-crowing Court,” but no business is done except receiving the rents. A real Lawless Court has not been held within living memory ; and it is needless to say that the present descendants of the supposed conspirators neither use charcoal nor whisper to each other over the after-supper bowl.

The church, which stands close to the Hall, is a large ancient looking building, and, from the arms of Boteler to be traced upon it, appears to have been erected by the Earl of Ormond, the lord of the estates, about 1450 ; but Lord Rich is believed to have repaired and heightened

the tower. In the north aisle is a tomb nearly 500 years old, with the following inscription in Latin :—

“Pray for Anne Snokeshull, daughter of John Filol, of Landemere, who lieth here, God have mercy and compassion on her soul, who died on St. Valentine's Day, in the year of Jesus Christ, 1386.”

At the west end of the town are six tenements or almshouses, the wretched remnant of a noble hospital which Lord Rich intended to found here; and the first Earl of Warwick, indeed, recites in his will that he had partly carried this out by building “a mansion” for the purpose, and directed an endowment of £60. a year. In addition to the money payment he ordered that “every one of the said almmen and poor people shall every year for ever have two good loads of wood out of his woods in Rochford, to be ledd and carryed for them to the said almshouses.” All this was utterly neglected; the endowment was never made; and the inmates have neither stipend nor fuel. The other charities consist of 15 acres of land at Hockley, left by Thomas Joscelyn, in 1604; and 14 acres near the town, given by unknown donors, the rents of which are distributed in coals, &c.; and there are two cottages occupied by poor families free.

RAYLEIGH.—THE CASTLE.—We have directed our attention first to Rochford as the modern metropolis of the Hundred, but the ancient place of power in the district was Rayleigh, five miles to the westward—now a second-rate country village, with few mansions of much importance about it, but in earlier times an Honor with fifty subject lordships, and a place of considerable importance and strength, even before the Norman displayed his victorious sword above the white cliffs of conquered Britain. But time has here almost completed his destructive task. We look around in vain for remnants of departed glory. We stumble not in our walks over moss-covered ruins. The plough in its progress turns up no treasured bones.

“No mossy door  
Grates on harsh hinges o'er the ruined floor;  
No pointed arch, with dread portcullis hung,  
Bids horror stalk the timid hinds among;  
No deep dark dungeon strikes their souls with fear,  
Nor swelling towers their threatening turrets rear.”

Nothing has survived but this huge mound of earth, and even the origin of this last relic is matter of mere conjecture with most of those who now loiter over it in their Sunday or summer evening rambles. It is recorded in that fountain of olden history, the Domesday Book, that Rayleigh Castle, of which the remaining mount is part, was built by Suene before the Norman conquest. There is reason, however, for believing that this was a fortress of much older date. It appears to have been called “the Ruined Castle” in the time of Edward the Confessor, so that it is conjectured Suene's works were only an addition or repair; and the oldest of our local historians adds—“from the irregularity of the work, an additional fortification seems to have been made in the Baron's wars.” The mount, which has a rather oval shaped base, is surrounded by a ditch, and defended by other embankments, on the east side in particular. The western side is circular and upwards of a hundred feet high. The other, of an oval form, is lower. The interior vallum is fifty feet high, and the principal ditch is in places fifty, and in others thirty feet wide. Parts of the other ditches are filled up, and the works in places broken down; much being necessarily left to conjecture as the eye traces the forms of the ancient castle.



As we are told there was not the slightest vestige of a stone fabric two centuries ago, we may conclude that, like many of the castles in the times of the Saxons and Danes, it was composed wholly of earth. A mud castle sounds rather strangely to ears accustomed to the destructive roar of shot and shell, but within this steep the olden warriors, armed with battle-axe and bow, defied their enemies, and thought themselves impregnable. "From its situation," it has been observed, "at a little distance from the town, it must have made a very grand appearance, and by the declivity of the ground towards the north, had a natural strength." From the summit of the mount a fine prospect is obtained of the surrounding country, in some directions for at least thirty miles. Below us, village, farm-house, and cottage lie scattered in the midst of woods and waving fields, and in one direction glimpses are caught of a part of the Thames, and several of its creeks. But to return—Suene, the founder of the castle, who possessed the barony of Rayleigh, with its fifty lordships, and nearly eighty knight's fees dependent on it, appears to have managed his affairs so very dexterously that at the critical turn he joined the conquerer and retained his possessions, which remained intact in his family till 1163, when they were forfeited by the cowardice of Henry De Essex, at the battle of Coleahull, in Wales. By various grants from the crown it came to Hubert De Burgh; to the Earl of Oxford in 1380; soon after to the Duke of York. Henry VIII. gave it to Sir Thomas Boleyn; subsequently it came to Lord Rich, and the estate has since been scattered amongst numerous families—the title of "Baron of Rayleigh," which was revived a few years since, being merely honorary. The site of the mount, "that famous piece of antiquity," as an old writer calls it, belongs to Sir R. Digby Neave, but the manor of Rayleigh is the property of the Bristow family, whose ancestor bought it from the Earl of Nottingham about 160 years since. Rayleigh appears to have continued a considerable market town, for in 1249 we find the Countess of Kent suing the Earl of Oxford for setting up a market at Prittlewell, to the injury of her market at Rayleigh; and in the Certificate of Chantries it is said—"The town of Rayleigh ys a very great and populous town, having in it about the number of three hundred house-living people;" it is added "and far from the church," from which some have conjectured the present church was not built at this period. There was at one time a chapel in the parish, though even tradition—who, nestling by the hearth side, often keeps alive the remembrance of some local fact to which history deposeth not—is now unable to point out its site. In 1349, however, Henry VI. made a grant of "the site of the chapel of Rayleigh, four acres of arable and pasture land of Estwood," and other property, to one Edward Bury, and his heirs. In the days of its feudal importance there were many privileges attached to Rayleigh. The lord had a view of frank-pledge, and a court was held from month to month. The celebrated Lawless Court is stated by Hearne and Weaver, and other olden writers, to appertain to this manor. Before time had shorn the castle of its importance it had a large park attached to it, the keepers being persons of considerable importance; and the juice of the generous grape was handed round as a natural product of the soil, to make beards wag in the baron's hall, or swell the shouts of the vassals as they greeted the birth of a heir or quaffed success to their own good swords. Domesday Book, in noticing the park, adds that it had "six arpenni of vineyard, yielding, in a good season, twenty modii of wine;" but

civilisation and agriculture have long since applied to it the pick-axe and the plough, and the wheat ear has succeeded the vine.

The church is a good and stately building, mostly in the perpendicular style, with a few brasses and the remnants of some fine old tombs, part of them to members of the Barrington family, formerly of power and repute here. One of these relics was described nearly a century ago as "an altar-tomb, which tradition ascribes to one Alders, and others would have it for one of the great family of Suene; but as the church must have been built long since the time even of Henry De Essex, it probably covers a more modern lord." In the south chapel, which belongs to Sir Digby Neave, as the owner of the castle, is an altar monument without inscription.

The charities of the parish consist of the site of the old workhouse, where formerly stood two tenements, left by Isaac Gilbert in 1640, for schooling poor children; the dividends of £344. 6s. 6d. stock, purchased with money left by the Rev. Dr. Sykes in 1763, for putting children to school and a distribution of bread; the moiety of the rents of 5A. 2R. 32P. of poor's land, held jointly with Hockley; and £2. 2s. from the site of a house in Mill-lane, left by an unknown donor.

In the days of Suene, Rayleigh Park appears to have extended over several of the surrounding parishes, on one side to Eastwood, and on others to Hadleigh and Thundersley—a park in those times not being the trim neatly-kept tract we now see, but consisting to a great extent of thick wild forest lands. Eastwood, as its name implies, was absorbed in it. The church was a chapel to Prittlewell down to a period below the reign of Henry II. The manor, which in 1210 gave name to the family of De Estwood, passed through nearly the same possessors to the present owner of Rayleigh; it belongs to the Bristow family, but the estate and mansion of Eastwoodbury belong to the Wren family.

**HADLEIGH CASTLE**, a picturesque and venerable ruin, stands above the neat little village, about three miles to the south-west of Rayleigh, and its fragmentary walls and broken towers slumbering in solitude like the remains of a mangled giant of other days, on the brow of a steep hill which rises boldly from the water, impart a peculiar interest to the beauty of the surrounding scene. All historians agree that this castle was built in 1231 by Hubert De Burgh, who had a grant of the Honor of Rayleigh, and of Hadleigh as a part of it, from Henry III.—and the fact of his erecting this stronghold seems to imply that the castle of Rayleigh had then fallen into decay and neglect as undapted to the social system and warfare of the day. After the fall of Hubert de Burgh, the government of the castle was for a time in the De Tany family; and amongst others, the property was at different periods assigned, generally for life, to Margaret Queen of Edward I., the Earl of Oxford, the Duke of York, the Earl of Richmond, uterine brother of Henry VI., who had a grant of a market here on Wednesdays, in 1452; and Henry VIII. settled the castle, lordship, and manor on Anne of Cleves when he flung her from his fickle arms. From Edward VI. they came to Lord Rich. The following description of the castle—as the most perfect that has been published—is abridged from a paper by Mr. H. W. King, a gentleman to whom the county is much indebted for the talent he has brought to bear upon the elucidation and illustration of its antiquities:—

"No finer position could have been selected for the site of a baronial castle, whether for the purpose of security and defence or for the beauty and extent of its scenery. On all sides, except at the front, where it is approached by a narrow lane from the

village, the ground descends with a steep and rapid declivity, opposing at least a serious if not a formidable difficulty to any hostile approach or assault. From the summit of the hill the view is scarcely surpassed in any other part of the county—eastward, upon the left, it commands the line of hills towards Leigh, which lies about two miles distant, embosomed among trees, and appears almost to rise from the sea; thence, over the estuary of the Thames, to the German Ocean, the prospect extends till only the tops of the shipping can be discerned cutting the distant horizon. To the south-east are seen the islands of Thanet, Sheppey, and Grain, and the mouth of the Medway; southward flows the broad Thames, with the verdant and beautifully-wooded hills of Kent on its further shore. And life and deep interest are given to the picture by innumerable sails passing to and fro between the great metropolis and every corner of the earth—sails multiplied more than one-hundred fold since the days when the great justiciary looked down upon them from the majestic and frowning fortress, out of whose ruins we are endeavouring to eliminate the features which indicate its ancient grandeur and magnificence. The circuit of the walls was drawn by the architect in exact conformity with the shape of the hill, and the area was then probably reduced to a perfectly level plateau, as it at present exists; the walls externally, except on the east side, entered considerably below the level of the internal area, the ground, as has been observed, descending from the base of the walls in a steep and abrupt declivity. Unlike the early Norman castles, this is wanting in the massive keep enclosed within the circuit of the walls; the two flanking towers here, which appear to be constructed for analogous purposes, being projected entirely beyond the face of the walls, unless, indeed, the large circular tower, now raised to its foundations, which commanded the principal entrance, were the dominant tower. The length of the ballium, from east to west, is 887 feet, and its extreme width 180 feet, the area within the walls comprising about an acre and a quarter. The entire structure is built of Kentish rag stone cemented with mortar of extraordinary hardness and durability, containing a large admixture of sea shells, chiefly those of the cockle, obviously brought from the extreme point of the adjacent Island of Canvey, where lies a vast and apparently inexhaustible bed of them. Upon the north, west, and east sides, the castle is defended by a deep but not continuous ditch, now partly filled up and overgrown with ferns and brushwood. At the north-east and south-east corners are two lofty towers, but considerably reduced in height and very ruinous, that upon the north being nearly demolished, but the other is sufficiently perfect to exemplify the plan and construction of both, for they are clearly identical. Their outer form is circular, and both are hexagonal within and consisted of two stories, the access to which was by a novel stair now entirely destroyed. The walls are nine feet thick at the base, and batter rather sharply to the set-off, but from thence the inclination is but slight upon one angle to the top. The interiors are chiefly lined throughout with squared chalk beautifully and compactly masoned, and in the first story of the south-east tower are a few tiles disposed in herring-bone work, forming the back of a fireplace. These towers may have been originally about 60 feet high; each story is pierced with loop-holes widely splayed internally, and lined with chalk; in several of them are the curtain wall 66 feet long, 8 feet thick, and about 20 feet high, including its parapet, remains of iron bars, and in all the sockets in which bars have been fixed. A straight connected these towers; but only from two to three feet of the masonry now remain above ground. Between them there may have been a very small gateway, but nothing remains to indicate it. The walls of the ballium vary from four to six feet in thickness, and are strengthened at intervals by buttresses of great solidity. Along a considerable portion of the south wall are the remains of apartments or offices, above which was undoubtedly a broad rampart, with parapet, which must have contributed greatly to strengthen this side of the building, which was not, and could not be, from the nature of the ground, defended by a fosse. The inner walls are about four feet thick. Light was no doubt chiefly admitted to these apartments by windows opening into the bailey. Beneath the south wall, and twelve feet below the level of the inner area, rose a semicircular tower, the inner diameter of which was fifteen feet, and the thickness of the walls about eight feet. All that now remains of it is an immense semicircular mass of masonry torn from the side wall and upturned in the form of an inverted arch. Its position seems only to be accounted for by supposing that a land slip on the slope of the hill had carried away the foundations of the tower, and that this mass, the stone adhering by the extraordinary tenacity of the mortar, dropped into its present position.

From the basement of this tower a short arched and slightly curved passage, only two feet wide, led into a small room, or rather shaft, five feet by four feet, now filled up with earth, but, a few years since, open to the area above. This was apparently a communication with dungeons or vaulted apartments extending under the ballium or castle yard, and in the area above, upon the face of the wall, the head of a pointed arch can also be seen, which may have been a portion of the vaulting.

The principal gateway was upon the north side and towards the west end. It was commanded by a large circular tower, now completely destroyed ; but foundations, with the curves of the inner and outer wall, are clearly defined. Its diameter within the walls is 20 feet and the masonry is about eight feet thick. The east side of the gateway was simply flanked by a straight wall running northwards, and terminated by a massive semicircular buttress. Westward of the tower, within the walls, are the indications of apartments, and of what seems to have been a fire-place. From this tower and gateway, the circumjacent ground being lower than the exterior of the castle, gradually sloping, there is an embankment 210 feet long, and of the average width of 70 feet at the top and raised about ten feet high, extending to the western extremity of the northern fosse. The eastern moat is connected with the castle by a mound of earth chiefly, though not entirely, of natural formation, and of steep and precipitous descent, immediately in front of the great eastern towers. About midway between the north-east tower and the gateway tower, where the walls form an obtuse angle, are the foundations of a small flanking tower immediately opposite to that upon the south side, but inferior in size and strength. It appears to have been circular. The outer half is projected beyond the line of wall and its foundations remain a few feet above the ground, but the inner segment is marked only by the appearance of a few stones and a slight elevation of the ground along the line of the curve.

In the valley on the north side is an embankment of earth which evidently formed an approach to a wooden bridge across the brook which flows between the hills, and by the side of the embankment is a pond and spring where the inmates of the castle were supplied with water. Such is the description of the general plan of the castle as far as can be satisfactorily determined from existing remains."

Mr. King is of opinion that the castle was demolished about the middle of the fifteenth century—perhaps after the death of the Earl of Richmond in 1456 ; and he is also of opinion that when it was built there was a stream navigable to the foot of the hill.

Hadleigh church is an ancient Norman structure, with a semicircular east end to the chancel, in the form of a Roman basilica, separated from the nave by a heavy arch ; and in various parts are small niches, which once contained statues of saints. Various alterations have been made in the building at different periods. Recently the edifice has been thoroughly restored through the exertions of the Rev. T. Espin, the rector, and presents an admirable example of what church restoration ought to be. In the course of the work the walls were found a mass of paintings, one beneath the other, of four different periods, some fragments of which remain, affording fine specimens of the church adornment of other ages.

The only charities of the parish consist of £781. 5s. 3d. stock, given by Mrs. Martha Lovibond in 1820, for the education and clothing of poor children, the educational portion of which is applied to the national school.

The **LEIGH** referred to above is a pleasant little fishing town on the shore of Hadleigh Bay, opposite a part of Canvey Island, and has a custom-house and a coast guard station. Camden calls it "a pretty little town stocked with lusty seamen." The houses are partly on the shore, partly on the lofty and wooded acclivity above. The principal trade of the place depends upon the shrimp and winkle fishery, the breeding and nurture of oysters, for which there are fine layings between the island marsh lands and Canvey Island. The manor came from the Bernards, with that of Hadleigh, to Lady O. Sparrow, but the soil now belongs to various families. The church is a noble building of ancient date, with its lofty ivy-wreathed tower rising above the crown of the hill, a welcome mark to the mariner bound into the homeward port. The nave, aisle, and chancel are in the perpendicular style ; and its fine proportions, painted windows, and carved oak stalls, class it amongst the most beautiful and best kept churches in the county. A writer a century ago observed—"In this

church and church-yard are more monumental inscriptions than in all the Hundred beside, and mostly of sea-faring people." Amongst them are the following—the first being a translation of the Latin original—

"Sacred to the memory and honour of Robt. Salmon, Esq., a great ornament to the state, the restorer of the art of navigation, nearly lost in 1614, master of the Trinity House in 1617, elected sheriff of London in 1640; a man for religion and probity worthy of constant imitation. He died 1641, aged 74; and here, with his ancestors for three centuries past, looks for the coming of his Saviour."

"Near this place lieth Capt. John Rogers, who, after several commands at sea, executed with great courage and fidelity, was made captain of His Majesty's ship Unicorn, in which he behaved himself with incomparable valour and conduct in three bloody engagements with the Dutch, in 1672. Ob. 30 Nov., 1688, æt. 65."

There are good free and national schools in the parish, one of them founded by Lady O. B. Sparrow, who provided an endowment for the support of the master and mistress. There is a charity amounting to £10. a year, partly left by Sir Samuel Moyer in 1811, and partly given by Capt. Moyer previously, in commemoration of his deliverance from shipwreck in Leigh Roads; and of this £1. 1s. is for a sermon on the 6th of August, 5s. for the clerk, and the remainder in sums of 5s. or 7s. each to poor decayed fishermen or their widows.

Many of the parishes of the Hundred are of a purely rural character, with well-cultivated farms, and skirting woodlands, climbing to the hill-tops. Yonder, to the north-west of us, as we stand on Rayleigh Mount, is RAWBETH, a very ancient parish, though not mentioned in Domesday Book, and no record is found of it till the reign of King John. That it was occupied by the Romans is proved by the coins that have been picked up, broken pottery of that people, and urns with calcined bones found lying in a trench formed of Roman tiles. Indeed these relics are not uncommon in the district, having been found at Rayleigh, Eastwood, and in other parishes; and in one instance, eleven years ago, a pot with 200 silver denarii was turned up. The manor of the Hall, once in the possession of Cardinal Wolsey, now belongs to St. John's College, Cambridge, and Beches to Sion College, London, having been given to it by Dr. White, the founder. The church was rebuilt in 1823. The parish extends from Battles nearly up to Hull Bridge.\* Pursuing our way along the vale of the Crouch—the battle-field of Ironside and Canute, which we have already travelled over (page 31), we pass HOCKLEY, with a hamlet at Hull Bridge, a scattered village at the Common on the road to Rochford, and its antique little church perched upon a lofty hill-top. Hockley-hall was anciently part of the possessions of Barking Abbey, but the Bristow family are now the lords; the manor of Lower Hockley Hall belongs to J. R. S. Phillips, Esq.; and Bawdewyns to A. Holt White, Esq. Some years ago an enterprising villager discovered near the Common a medicinal spring, whose healing waters were to wash away half the ills that flesh is heir to. London speculators rushed to the spot and built an elegant pump-room in the Grecian style. A spacious hotel rose up hard by. Lines of villas were projected. Dr. Granville talked learnedly of the properties of the water, which was said to contain common salt, bicarbonate of lime, sulphate of magnesia, and sulphate of lime, and he included Hockley in his "Spas of England." The before humble and unknown village was to swell into a fashionable city of refuge for asthmatic patients and "children and young people inclined to have

\* The poor have £1. a year from Rolph's charity.



ricketty and bandy legs," for the strengthening and straightening of which high medical authority declared the spring would be infallible. This was in 1842; but the fame and fortune of Hockley Spa, having put forth these buds of promise, never ripened. The proprietors called upon the afflicted to come and be cured, but they came not. The consequence is that the foundations of the villas have not yet been laid—the hotel which was to be filled with aristocratic guests is glad to catch a humble wayfarer or a village customer—and the pump-room, dingy and deserted, perplexes the passing stranger as to the reason for planting this specimen of the modern classic in so sequestered a spot.—The poor of the parish have the moiety of the rent of 5*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* of land, and 20*s.* a year from Sudbury's charity, left in 1615.

Adjacent, on the road to Rochford, is **HAWKWELL**, a village scattered round a large common, which is now enclosed. Hawkwell Hall, which was part of the estate of the father of Anne Boleyn, is the property of the Bristow family; Clements Hall, which took its name from the family of Clement, which resided here in the fifteenth century, was in 1745 purchased by the descendants of Lord Rich by Thomas Holt, Esq., from whom it passed to his nephew, Thomas White, Esq., and it now belongs to Algernon Holt White, Esq., the representative of the united families.\* Away to the left, on the river bank, is **SOUTH FAMBLEDON**, which was given in Edmund the Confessor's reign to the monks of Ely; but in 1365 passed to Pleshy College. The Hall stands on a rising ground near the ferry. Further up lies **ASHINGDON**, the Assandune giving name to the battle which transferred the mastership of England to the victorious Danes. There is [not, however, a trace of the conflict either on the surface of the soil or in the records of the parish. Suene was lord here at the time of the survey; and the manorial rights are now vested in the Earl of Mornington. The antique little church is planted picturesquely on a hill-top, which commands views over nearly the whole of the Hundred, and along the vale up to Maldon. As we gaze upon the quiet scene we are carried back to the time when hostile forces were hastening up the valley, and probably from the 'vantage spot on which we stand the Danish leaders were reconnoitring the advancing foe, while

" All the field beneath  
Shone with a bright variety of death."

But anon the struggle ceases. Canute has long since broken up his camp on yonder high-ground at Canewdon. The groan of the battle-field has ceased. The grass is growing thick and strong upon the barrows by the river bank beneath which are buried the bones of the slain. And instead of warriors with battle-axes, bands of peaceful pilgrims with crosses in their hands are flocking up the roads from Stambridge, Paglesham, and Rochford, to prostrate themselves in the little church of Ashingdon, before a saintly image, which they believe can relieve the soul of its burthen and the body of its disease. Newcourt tells us—

" Upon a report of miracles done by an image in this church, which drew a great concourse of people thither daily, excited thereto rather by the imposition of those miracles than by orderly devotion, Ralph (Baldock) Bishop of London, that the people might not be cheated in their devotions, granted his commission to the official of the archdeacon of Essex, and to the vicar of Prittlewell, to go to this church and search into the form and quality of this image, and to enquire diligently among the clergy and laity of credit about the imposition of these miracles, and how they came first to

\* The poor have 20*s.* a year from Sudbury's charity.



be divulged, and into the cause of such a sudden confluence of the people thither, and into other circumstances of the fact, strictly inhibiting, under pain of excommunication and interdiction, that no man circumvent the people by any false inventions about the premises, or induce 'em to a new worship by this or any other like occasion, till the worship be approved by their superior on better information, sequestering in the mean time whatever oblations had been made to it; but I have not found any return made of this commission."

CANEWDON, the adjoining parish, has a pretty village on the high grounds which rise above the southern side of the vale of the Crouch. Cricksea is seen on the opposite side of the river, and below is a tract of rich marsh lands, including part of Wallasea Island, cut off by the creek. The church stands upon a lofty hill, and on the steeple, which rises to the height of 74 feet, are seen quartered the arms of France and England, with the shields of Bohun, Mowbray, and Warren. Close by, on the north, is the Hall, which was anciently fortified in the style of a castle, with a double trench and a moat, the course of which is still discernible. Here was the site of Canute's camp, which appears to have been of an oblong form, and enclosed about six acres. Most of the works have been levelled, partly by time and partly by the husbandman, but we can still follow the fosse, which extends round a part of the manor-house, and probably was combined with its defence in later days. There is, however, an interest of still more ancient date than the Dane connected with the parish. Here probably the Druid worshipped; here it is certain the old Roman fixed a station; and this was a place, says an old historian, "proper enough for an officer under the Comes Littoris Saxonici to have an eye upon the pirates, as he might have access to it either by sea or land." Only a few years ago part of a figure of gigantic dimensions, carved in stone, was dug up in the parish—a fragment of a heathen deity once worshipped in grove or temple, but prostrated as war swept over the spot or the holy influence of christianity began to pervade the land. Roman urns, too, differing widely in form and ornament, have been found by the dozen in digging for gravel, attesting a long residence of a party of the imperial rulers of the country in this locality. Miss Eaton is lady of Canewdon Hall; and Loftmans, a good mansion, was purchased by Mr. Jeremiah Kersteman in 1747.—The poor have a rent-charge of £2. 12s. 2d. out of New Hall Farm, bequeathed by Mr. Totham for an obit, &c., seized by the crown, and settled by a Chancery decree; the rent of 6A. 3lp. of land and three cottages, purchased with money left by Richard Woods, in 1687; and the produce of the poor lands and cottages, yielding more than £100 a-year, given by various donors. Part is paid to the schoolmaster, and the rest distributed in money, bread, and coals.

Still pursuing our way along the verge of the Hundred, and turning eastward, we pass through PAGLESHAM. It is on a creek of the Crouch, which separates it from Wallasea Island, part of which it includes.\* Inland, on the right, towards Rochford, is LITTLE STAMBRIDGE. This manor, which was owned by the monks of Holy Trinity, Canterbury, before the survey, belongs to Jas. Tabor, Esq.† Adjoining, and including a portion of Wallasea Island, though lying detached from it four miles off, is GREAT STAMBRIDGE, which was settled upon the Charterhouse by its founder, and disafforested by letters patent in 1638. BABLINE, the next point in our path, lies upon

\* Six poor men have the dividends of £900 stock, left by John Massu in 1807.

† Three cottages in Rochford have been left for the poor.

a creek communicating with the Broomhill, which extends up to Rochford; the manor of the Hall has been held by the cathedral of St. Paul's from days before the Conquest.\* To the right are SUTTON and SHOPLAND; the latter was described in 1723 as having four farm-houses, a vicarage-house, and one cottage, but without an ale-house; and a poor-rate was unknown. There were only nine houses found in it at the last census. The manor of Botyllers, originally a distinct hamlet, is the property of A. Holt White, Esq. Further on, in the south-east corner of the county, five miles from Rochford, are GREAT and LITTLE WAKERING, the former a good village. The twin parishes formed part of the possessions of the great Suene. Subsequently they were broken up amongst various proprietors; and a family which resided at Wakering-place, and took the name of De Wakering from the parish, made some figure in the public and political proceedings of their day. John Wakering was chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster in the time of Richard II.; another was master of the rolls and keeper of the privy seal to Henry V.; a third, made bishop of Norwich, in 1416, was selected for his wisdom and learning as one of the English divines sent to the Council of Constance; and Dionysius Wakering, Esq., was one of the knights sent by the county to Cromwell's parliament in 1654 and 1656. The property, however, was long since sold, and the name has died out of the county. The manorial rights of the Wakerings are now vested in Sir John Tyrell, having been brought into that family by marriage, in the last century. In Little Wakering is some poor's-land, consisting of two acres, called the Play Stall, given by an unknown donor.

**FOULNESS ISLAND.**—Off the coast of Wakering are a cluster of six little islands, which, as the main land became generally occupied, have been protected from the sea, cultivated, and peopled; and in them are to be found some of the richest marshes and finest wheat-growing lands of the Hundred. Wallasea, so called from the walls which shut out the sea, lies between Paglesham and the Crouch, and contains about 3,000 acres, which are divided for parochial purposes between Canewdon, Eastwood, Purleigh, Great Stambridge, and Little Wakering. The smaller islands, varying from 200 to 600 acres each, lie between the sea and the windings of the creeks. Little Potton, New England, and part of Havengore (the remainder being extra-parochial), are in Little Wakering parish—Great Potton and Rushley in Great Wakering. Foulness, the most important of the group, with its village and various little hamlets, and its lands stretching out with a point far into the sea, is reached at low tide by a headway over the sands from Wakering. It is four or five miles in length and breadth, and contains about 6,000 acres, besides a tract of saltings lying beyond the walls. Originally it appears to have been redeemed from the sea and peopled by the inhabitants of the neighbouring parishes on the main land, and was apportioned out between them. A little chapel was, however, erected on the island as early as the twelfth century; and in 1408 a chantry was founded by Joane, Countess of Hereford, the priest of which, it was provided, was "to perform all offices for the inhabitants, who, by reason of the swelling of the water, could not always resort to their proper parish churches of Rochford, Sutton, Little Wakering, Shopland, Eastwood, and Little Stambridge;" and for this he was to receive all the tithes and offerings in the island, before belonging to the ministers of the parishes named. At the

\* The poor's cottage was given by an unknown donor at an early date.

Reformation this charity was converted into a rectory. George Finch, Esq., is lord of the manor, which has come to him from the late Earl of Winchelsea. The soil of the island is of a peculiar character. Arthur Young, in his survey, described it as the richest in the county; and he added—

“The whole was forty years ago under water and no corn got for two years; but after that the crops grew greater than ever, so as to furnish an effectual proof that the water did good, after being chastened and corrected by the atmosphere. The saline quality is entangled in a peculiar manner, very different from what is found in upland counties. The richest soils in such are composed in a great measure of sand, mixed with a portion of clay, and very friable where the sand predominates. But with the soil of Foulness the case is different, for whatever friableness it possesses seems to be owing to a fermentative power, arising from the action of the atmosphere on a body abounding with mucilaginous particles. There is very little appearance of any sand in it; the particles are so fine that it might be expected to become an impalpable powder; but on the contrary it is capable of such adhesion that a clod will become very hard; crumbled in the hand it yields a strong scent indicative of the presence of volatile alkali. The fertility of it is so great that the farmers are very little attentive to dung; nor do they commonly venture it for any kind of corn, as it throws up much straw without improving the crop.”

The air of these islands used to be accounted deadly to those not accustomed to it; and if the following passage from De Foe's “Tour through Britain, in 1714,” may be depended upon—but we suspect the traveller was hoaxed by the jocular islanders—beauty used to be sacrificed by wholesale on the mephitic altar.

“One thing deserves mention here, which is, that all along this county it is very frequent to meet with men that have had from five or six, to fourteen or fifteen wives; and I was informed that in the marshes, over against Canvy (spelt Candy), was a farmer who was then living with his five and twentieth; and that his son, who was but thirty-five years old, had already had about fourteen. Indeed, this part of the story I only had by report, though from good hands, but the other is well known, and will be attested, about Fobbing, Corringham, Thundersley, Bemfleet, Prittlewell, Wakering, Great Stambridge, Cricksea, Burnham, Dengie, and other towns of the like situation: the reason, as a merry fellow told me, who said he had had about a dozen, was this, that they being bred in the marshes themselves, and seasoned to the places, did pretty well, but that they generally chose to leave their own lasses to their neighbours out of the marshes, and went to the uplands for a wife; that when they took the young women out of the wholesome fresh air they were clear and healthy; but when they came into the marshes among the fogs and damps, they presently changed complexions, got an ague or two, and seldom held it above half a year, or a year at most; and then, said he, we go to the uplands again and fetch another. Nor do the men in these parts hold it out as in other counties, for we seldom meet with very ancient people among the poor, inasmuch that hardly one-half of the inhabitants are natives of the place.”

On the coast, to the south of the Wakerings, lie the Shoeburys. NORTH SHOEBURY is a little inland, and SOUTH SHOEBURY along the shore at the mouth of the Thames, close to the Maplin Sands. Camden asserts that here stood a city of the East Saxons, called Sœobirig, but this appears a mere unfounded conjecture from a few hoary words of the old chronicler. That it was a fortified point of the Danes we have already seen; and though Morant asserted that the earth-works of the fortress had been washed away by the sea before his time, parts of them may still be traced. It appears by a recent paper of the Rev. W. Heygate, that within the memory of man there still remained “the larger segment of a circle, enclosed by a bank forty feet wide by twelve feet high, and reaching to the shore on either side. The width on the sea-face was 1,600 feet, and the depth inland 700 feet. There were marks of a trench outside.” The agriculturist and the builder have since encroached upon the spot; but the reverend gentleman adds:—

“As to the shape of the fortress, it is certainly possible that the sea may have washed

away part of the circle, but I submit, with deference to those who are better acquainted with Danish camps, that since the shore runs out three miles and is very shallow, and since, therefore, the Danish ships must have lain exposed to fire, if attacked at low water,—I submit that they were drawn up high and dry inside the camp; that the ocean side was defended by palisades, and that the original enclosure was, therefore, of much the same extent and shape as at present."

Barracks have now been erected here for artillery practice, as the sands afford a fine range. War is still the business of the spot; but the deadly Armstrong gun has succeeded the Danish battle-axe and bow.

Following the upward course of the Thames, we reach **SOUTH-CHURCH**, with its pleasant little village crowning the declivity above the estuary. The manor, which was given to Christ Church, Canterbury, as early as 824, is now the property of George Welch, Esq. From the highlands of the parish there are beautiful views of the Thames, with the islands with which it is dotted on the Essex and the opposite shore, and beyond the Nore up to the mouth of the Medway.

**SOUTHEND.—PRITTLEWELL AND THE PRIORY.**—A mile above is **SOUTHEND**; a pleasant and greatly improved watering-place, the only one on this part of the coast. It is a hamlet of Prittlewell, but in its general character, its population and public buildings, and its pretensions as a place of fashionable resort, it throws the mother parish into the shade. Of the olden history of Southend there is nought to tell. It is a growth of the last century. In a journal of 1768 we read;—"A scheme is on foot to render Southend a convenient place for bathing, the situation being esteemed the most agreeable and convenient for that purpose on the Essex coast." Buildings were accordingly erected; but the plan and the projectors alike failed, and the matter slumbered till 1800. A member of the Heygate family then purchased by auction the buildings of the speculators, and patronised and improved the place. In 1804 Southend was visited by Queen Caroline and the Princess Charlotte. This event stamped upon it an aristocratic and fashionable character; and since then it has gone on extending. First there rose up the fine range of buildings called the Terrace, on the high cliff towards Leigh; a pier was carried a mile and a quarter into the sea, under an Act of Parliament obtained in 1835; a handsome church was erected in 1840 by a subscription of £1,500; the railway to the metropolis was opened a few years ago; and now, by the enterprise thus awakened, a new town is rising up in a pleasant spot in the vicinity. The position of Southend opposite Sheerness, a little above the mouth of the Thames, its cliffs and declivities, with the views and rural walks about the highlands of the neighbourhood, its dry and salubrious air, and the fact that it is now placed by the railway within a hour of London, render it a popular and delightful place of summer sojourn.

The village, or rather it may be called the mother town, of **PRITTLEWELL**, stands about a mile inland to the northward, the ground rising in picturesque hills from the shore. On one of these stands the parish church, and from it two streets run at right angles to each other, one of them extending down the slope. It is a place of great antiquity; and appears to have been a ville of some importance in the time of Edward the Confessor. At the Conquest it is found in the possession of Suene; and his son, Robert De Essex, founded a Priory here in the reign of Henry II., for monks of the order of Clugni. The monastery stood about a quarter of a mile from the church, and was at first a cell to the priory of Lewes, in Sussex; but it afterwards

became independent, and so grew in wealth that its income exceeded that of several houses of greater pretensions. At the suppression, when there were only seven monks, its revenues amounted to £194. 14s. 8d. The house and manor of Priors were granted to Thomas Audely, brother of the Lord Chancellor; afterwards they came to Lord Rich; and they were purchased of the Earl of Nottingham by Daniel Scratton, Esq., who then resided at Billericay, but was born at Belsted, in Suffolk, and had amassed a good fortune, prior to 1660. He left this and other estates he had bought in the neighbourhood, to his nephew, Daniel Scratton, of Broomfield, who died intestate in 1744. A fierce contest then arose as to who was entitled to the estates; and the question was tried at Chelmsford, in 1745, when it was decided in favour of Daniel Scratton, of Harkstead, Suffolk. They are now held by Daniel Scratton, Esq., a name popularly connected with the sports of the field as the master of the Essex Union hounds, and he resides at the handsome mansion of Prittlewell Priory, which has risen up on the site of the old monastery. He is the owner of the chief manors of the parish; but of Sutton Temple, which was held by the Templars of Cressing in 1280, the Earl of Mornington is the lord. Milton Hamlet, now a western suburb of Southend, is stated to have been once a distinct parish, but has been reduced to its present dimensions by the encroachment of the water. Bit by bit it was snatched away by storm and tide; its church was submerged, and some years ago its ruins were visible at low water. Milton is one of the manors belonging to Mr. Scratton; it was given to the monks of the Holy Trinity, Canterbury, before the Conquest; and in a charter of Edward the Confessor, confirming it to them, it was said:—"If any one shall hereafter presume to deprive them of this their lawful right, or shall consent to the same, let him be for ever anathematised and damned with the traitor Judas." The qualities of the shore along this district for an oyster nursery are thus stated to have been accidentally discovered in 1770:—

"One Outing, having been out at sea in his luy or boat, and having on board some small oysters, more than could be used, he threw them overboard on this shore. About a year after, being accidentally here at low water, and seeing those oysters, he opened one of them, and found them much improved in size and fatness. He got more oysters, and tried the experiment again, and found it to answer. Upon that he went and took a lease of the shore at a low rent, the method of improving oysters by laying them here not being known. By this trade Outing got a great deal of money, and built a house near the sea. From that time advantageous leases have been granted of this shore, and a great trade in oysters carried on."

The church of Prittlewell is a handsome structure. It has been described as "the largest and the fairest in this Hundred." It has a lofty stone tower, with pyramidal corners, and is a well-known sea-mark for the navigators of the neighbouring waters.

There is a free school in the parish, first founded by Daniel Scratton, Esq. and the Rev. T. Case, the rector, in 1727, and since augmented by the lords of the Priory manor; there are good school rooms, house and garden for the master, and an endowment of 20A. 2R. 25P. of land. The poor have 10s. a year from Joselyn's charity, and the rent of 17A. 2R. 7P. of land, and a cottage at Great Stambridge, left by Thomas Brown, in 1619, and distributed at Christmas.

## Barnstable Hundred.

This Hundred contains the following 33 parishes :—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.			
					Rectorial.		Vicarial.	
Bemfleet, South }	Bem, a tree or stock ; its woody	8361	570	8811			242	0 0
Bemfleet, North }	state, and a bay .....	8418	322	2987	*000	0 0		
Bowers Gifford ...	The Giffards, ancient owners	2608	230	3335	600	0 0		
Bulphan .....	Bull's-fen .....	1667	261	1818	410	0 0		
Burstead, Great }	The Saxon words meaning a	2502	2255	7844	268	10 0	177	10 0
and Bitterley }	town or tower ; and sted, a	1829	179	1858	250	0 0		
Burstead, Little }	place .....							
Chadwell .....	St. Chads-well .....	1977	282	2745	408	0 0		
Corringham ... {	Words meaning Corr's pasture	3536	261	3508	830	0 0		
	and house.....							
Doddingtonhurst.....	Dodo's-hurst or wood .....	1392	393	2702	630	7 8		
Downham .....	Dun and ham—a village on a hill	2228	250	2863	*100	0 0		
Dunton .....	Dun and tun—hill-town .....	2338	178	2320	*508	0 0		
Fobbing .....	Phobe's-pasture .....	2954	421	3400	761	9 4		
Horndon, East }	Saxon words signifying Thorn,	1477	475	1970	344	0 0		
Horndon, West }	hill, and the position of the	479	62	1024	+80	0 0		
Horndon-on-H. }	parishes .....	2634	532	4379	1821	0 0		
Hutton .....	The village on a hill .....	1699	367	2577	*390	0 0		
Ingrave .....	A meadow, and name of owner...	1792	521	2028	208	0 0		
Laindon Hills... }	Long-hill .....	2372	383	2853	*245	0 0		
Laindon .....		1775	295	1824				
Baildon .....		1627	157	*854	*778	0 0		
Mucking .. {	Muesel, great; and ing, a mea-	2631	239	2820	400	0 0	200	0 0
	dow—great meadow .....							
Nevedon .....	New-vale—a new settlement.....	991	199	1296				
Orsett .....	Horse's-heath .....	4124	1803	7768	1225	0 0		
Pitsea .....	A pit, and its position near the	2167	246	1823	*420	0 0		
	water.....							
Ramsden Crays }	Ram and den, Rams-valley; and	1456	252	1612	290	0 0		
Rams. Bellhouse }	the names of ancient owners {	2625	465	3261				
Shanfield.....	Scen and fold—a pleasant field	2397	933	6323	576	0 0		
Stanford-le-Hope.	A stone-ford.....	2984	439	3659	11840	0 0		
Thundersley .....	Thunder's pasture grounds .....	2499	492	2903	564	0 0		
Thurrock Little...	A sacred grove of oak .....	1495	308	3017	523	10 0		
Tilbury, East... {	The words meaning, a husband-	2227	491	2634			244	0 0
Tilbury, West. }	man or tile, and bury or	2086	519	2504	562	0 0		
	burgh, a city, castle, or							
	court .....							
Vange .....	The Saxon word Funge—a taking	2250	164	1959	325	0 0		
Wickford..... {	Wic, a castle or village, and a	1758	490	2563	*293	0 0		
	ford .....							

\* This is the annual value.

† Modus settled in 1778.

‡ Of this, £391. 14s. is payable to the impropriate rectors and their lessee; £248. to lay impropriators; and £181. 6s. to the vicar.

§ Ramsden Bellhouse is consolidated with Stock.

|| There is further tithe payable on Abbots Hall.

The Hundred is of a straggling character—a narrow slip of it extending across the high road below Brentwood; and skirting Chelmsford Hundred, it runs 17 miles up to that of Rochford, at Rayleigh and Hadleigh. From this point it extends along the river up to Grays, and on the west it adjoins to Chafford. It is pleasantly undulated, and the south and south-eastern parts command a series of fine water-side views.

THE CITY OF TILLABURG.—TILBURY FORT.—At the farthest part of the Hundred, on the river side, is LITTLE THURROCK, adjacent to Grays; and below it are the Tilburys, East and West; originally, it appears, forming one parish. At EAST TILBURY, which is chiefly owned by William Cotton, Esq., the lands being nearly all freehold, was the



ancient ferry across the Thames, leading to the famous Roman road on the opposite shore, known as Higham Causeway; and this is believed to have been the spot at which the Emperor Claudius crossed the river in pursuit of the Britons. WEST TILBURY lies just above it, and this locality was the site of one of the ancient cities of the land—Tillaburg, which from its name appears to have been a Roman settlement or station, and from hence the imperial rulers had a road to Billericay. Bede mentions Tillaburg as a place of importance, and one of the first storehouses from which the riches of christianity were distributed over the land. "Certain it is," says a later historian, "that here was in the seventh century a considerable town, though now reduced to a poor village; for when Ceadde, Cedd, or St. Chad came and converted again the East Saxons to christianity, and was consecrated bishop of this diocese, he fixed one of his episcopal sees at Tillaburg." This Cedd flourished about 654, and we find little notice of Tillaburg after that date. Probably it was destroyed by the repeated incursions of the sea-robbers in the succeeding ages, to which its position peculiarly exposed it; but we do not hear that any ruins of its ancient strength and dignity have been brought to light. That the parish, however, long continued more populous than we now find it may be inferred from the fact that a free chapel, said to have been founded in the time of St. Thomas à Beckett, formerly stood a mile from the church, on the very spot on which the battlements of Tilbury Fort have since been raised. This formidable fortress, which effectually guards the passage of the river, was originally erected as a block house by Henry VIII. When the country was menaced by the Spanish Armada great efforts were made to get the fort, then only a small work, into order, as it was given out that the Thames was to be a point of attack. Hakluyt says, on both sides of the river fortifications were erected according to the prescription of Frederick Genebelli, an Italian, and there were certain ships brought to make a bridge. A report of the Earl of Leicester recommended that lighters and chains should be provided and sent down to stop the river at Tilbury, and this was done. Still, at the time Elizabeth reviewed the army here (see page 99), the fort appears to have been in a wretched state. It was not till the time of Charles II., after the Dutch fleet had entered the Medway and burnt several men of war, that it was enlarged, strengthened, and had proper attention bestowed upon it. The present fort was built soon after 1687, from the designs of Sir Bernard de Gomme, the Engineer-General, on the then new principles of military defence introduced by Coehorn and Vauban. In the contract for the works the stone gateway is put down at £634. The form of the fort is pentagonal; and it is strong—much stronger than would be thought from a glance at it in passing down the Thames, its guns commanding the whole turn of the river at Tilbury Hope. It is capable of accommodating a good garrison, and the works are well arranged. There is a broad esplanade, and the bastions, which are stated to be the largest in England, are faced with brick and encompassed by a double ditch. The inner moat is very broad, and has a good counterscarp. Its defences on the land side consist of two small redoubts, and the power of laying all the adjoining marshes under water. Towards the river is a strong embattled wall, with an entrance gate in the middle, called the Water gate, and a ditch palisaded. At the place at which, according to the original plan, should have been the water bastion, intended to run out into the river, so as to command both curtains, stands a high tower

erected by Queen Elizabeth. This has been known as Queen Elizabeth's gateway; and tradition invests the room above with venerable interest, by a whisper that it was once occupied by the maiden queen. On the platform before it are mounted the heaviest guns.

West Tilbury was part of the possessions of Suene, and was afterwards split up into various manors, held by the De Tilbury and other families; but the soil is now freehold.

Gervase of Tilbury, one of the olden chroniclers, to whom we are compelled to trust for part of our early history, was born here, and was a man of some note in his day. He is described as nephew of Henry II. The Emperor Otto committed to him the marshalship of Arles; and his "Chronicle of England" made him one of the literary lights of the reign of King John. Another literary man of later date, and of a different and more daring character, was also connected with the neighbourhood. Daniel De Foe, in 1683, carried on a tile manufactory in the neighbourhood of Tilbury Fort—a novel undertaking in this now common production, as tiles before that time had been imported from Holland; and no doubt the inhabitants of the locality wondered as they saw "a middle-sized spare man, with a brown complexion, a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth," passing musingly from his yard to the ferry. The speculation was a failure; and the author of "Robinson Crusoe," while resident here, was hunted by the officers of justice—a reward of £50 being offered for his apprehension, for publishing his "Short Way with the Dissenters," and at length he found his way to the pillory.

In East Tilbury a rent-charge of £1. out of Folly Field, given by an unknown donor, and the rent of a rood of poor-land let for building, are distributed to the poor; a rent-charge of £5. given by William Towers, and another of £2. by William Hansworth, have not been paid, on the ground that they are void.

**THE CAVERNS AT CHADWELL.**—Adjacent to the Tilburys is the parish of Chadwell, a place of some interest from the immense caverns which are found here, evidently of vast antiquity. Part of them extend into other parishes; and in a field called Cave Field, in East Tilbury, is a horizontal passage leading to them. They were no doubt originally chalk pits; but their great depth, and the nature of their construction, have given rise to various and wide conjectures as to the purposes to which they have been applied. By some they are considered to have been granaries of the ancient Britons. Popular tradition calls them Dane-holes, and describes them as the hiding places in which the Danish pirates in their earlier inroads concealed the plunder gathered from the surrounding districts till it was convenient to carry it to their ships on the Thames. Others have believed them to have been veritable silver mines, from which King Cunobeline drew his wealth when he reigned at Colchester. Dr. Plot, in his "History of Oxfordshire," in noticing a locality in that county, observed—"Here might have been formerly a mine stopped by the aboriginal Britons upon the arrival and conquests of the Romans or Saxons, who, not being able to recover their country within the memory of man, it might be lost like the gold mine of Glass-Hitten in Hungary, or the gold mine of Cunobeline, in Essex, discovered again temp. Henry IV., as appears by the king's letters of mandamus, bearing date May 11, an. rot. 34, directed to Walter Fitzwalter concerning it, and since lost again." So strong was the conviction that these were the mines, that a century and a half ago

some keen joint-stock projectors formed a company to work the rich diggings of Chadwell, from which a full stream of wealth was to flow into the pockets of those who joined the adventurers; but we do not hear that it was ever carried further than the payment of the deposits. Camden thus refers to these mysterious subterranean chambers:—  
 “Near Tilbury are several spacious caverns in a chalky cliff, built very artificially of stone, to the height of ten fathoms, and somewhat straight at the top.” The learned and scientific Dr. Derham, who resided at Upminster, published the following description of these caves in 1706:—

“I myself measured three of the most considerable holes, and found one of them fifty feet six inches deep; another 70 feet 7 inches; another in the wood, northward, 80 feet; the depth of the western hole, near the road, is 55 feet 6 inches; on the other side of the way, in Hangman’s Wood, is another hole of 80 feet 4 inches. A cow fell down into the hole 55 feet 6 inches, but was not killed nor much hurt; it was drawn up by a carpenter, who went down and put ropes about her; the bottom is soft sand, on which the cow alighted, and was saved. Over the midst of the hole is an arch of 200 feet of chalk. These holes lie near the highway, within the compass of six acres of ground, leading from Stifford to Chadwell.”

Chadwell extends down to the Thames, and like most of the parishes in this locality, commands fine views into Kent. The manor of Chadwell Hall was from very early ages in the Bishops of London, but it has long since passed to other hands. Ingleby’s belongs to the poor of Winchester; and Biggings is the property of the dean and chapter of St. Paul’s, who had a grant of it after it was taken from Stratford Abbey at the suppression.

The charities for the poor consist of 20s. out of a house in Lombard-street, given by Peter Symonds, in 1586; and this having accumulated, in 1794 the Rev. W. Herringham and others increased the fund, and purchased £400 stock. The dividends are distributed in clothing, coals, &c.

**ORSETT HALL.**—THE SEAT OF R. WINGFIELD BAKER, Esq.—The village of Orsett, which lies next in our path, is one of the most pleasant and populous in this part of the Hundred. Its ancient name was Horseheath, now corrupted into Orsett. It is in extent above 4,000 acres, and had at the census in 1851 a population of 1,550, including Orsett hamlet, which was formerly part of the Royal Park of Crondon, and lies 13 miles distant, near Stock and Buttsbury (as noticed page 227). In Saxon days the whole of the parish belonged to the see of London. The Earl of Boulogne secured a slice of it at the Conquest; but the bishops continued to hold the manor of Orsett for more than 500 years afterwards. The greater part of the property being thus in the see of London, the bishop had a palace or country residence here, but of this no vestige remains, except the moat by which the house was surrounded. Part of the bridge which crossed the moat remained not many years since. It was situated to the north-west of the church, the footpath to which from the bishop’s house, and formerly called Bonner’s path, still remains. At a short distance to the west are evident remains of fish-ponds belonging to the bishop’s house—these were filled up and levelled some years since, and the plough now goes over them. In this residence King John was entertained and feasted by the right reverend host, for in the Patent Rolls is preserved an itinerary of that monarch, which states—

“The king was at Orsett, in Essex, on June 9th, 1209, being Tuesday. On the day before the king was at Rochester, and on the day after, being Wednesday, June 10th, the king was at Chelmsford.”

Here a royal favourite sought shelter in his tribulation, but found it not. Jesse, in his "Memorials of London," says—

"In 1232, Hubert De Burgh was deprived of his honors, appointments, and estates, and compelled to seek refuge in the sanctuary of Merton Priory, in Surrey. From hence his enemies followed him to a residence of the Bishop of London, in Essex, where, under promise of protection, he had taken up his residence. Hearing that an armed force was approaching to seize his person, he repaired to an adjoining chapel—"

That of Brentwood, as already shown, and not, as some have supposed, Orsett church, though probably, being so near the bishop's palace, it had the right of sanctuary. Here, too, lived Bonner, when he was busily engaged in plying the faggot as a means of re-conversion to the old faith; and doubtless beneath this roof the fate of many of the victims of that time was canvassed if not decided upon. But he was the last of his episcopal race who found a home here. On his deposition, Queen Elizabeth, under a power recently given to her by parliament, seized this and many other estates of the see, and for a time this property remained in the crown. In 1614 it was granted by James I. to Francis Downes, Esq., of Orsett, and his heirs for ever. It remained in this family till 1650, when, either by marriage or otherwise, it became the property of John Hatt, Esq., whose monument occupies a prominent place in the north chapel belonging to Orsett Hall, and who died 12th April, 1658. Having passed through other families, in 1746 it was purchased by Richard Baker, gent., of Stepney, who, dying in 1751, left the property to his son Richard. This gentleman was many years chairman of the quarter sessions of the county. He was married to Jane, daughter of Sir Clement Trafford, of Dunton Hall, in the county of Lincoln, but died without issue, 9th July, 1827. By his will he devised the whole property to his brother's nephew by marriage with Lady St. Aubyn—William Wingfield, Esq., for several years Welch Judge on the Brecknock Circuit, a Q.C., and for a long period a Master in Chancery, which latter office he resigned, March, 1849. He married, first, in 1786, the Lady Charlotte Maria, eldest daughter of Henry, seventh Baron and first Earl Digby; and by this lady, who died in 1807, had six children, the eldest of whom, G. Digby Wingfield, succeeded to the estates of his uncle, the Earl of Digby. His second daughter, Caroline Elizabeth, is the present Countess Dowager of Cottenham. Mr. Wingfield married secondly, in 1813, Elizabeth, daughter of W. Mills, Esq., of Bistone, Hants., by whom also he had issue. Charles, the second son by the latter marriage, was one of the commissioners at Lucknow, at the outbreak of the late Indian war, and with difficulty escaped with his life. He received the thanks of the Governor-General for his distinguished services, and is now Commissioner of Oude. Mr. Wingfield was M.P. for Bodmin in 1810. Upon succeeding to the property in 1849 he took the arms and name of Baker, by royal license. He died at Sherborne Castle, the seat of his eldest son, 21st March, 1858. The present owner of the estate is Richard Wingfield Baker, the third son of Mr. Wingfield Baker, who is lord of the manor of Orsett, as well as Stifford, Corringham, and North Benfleet; and sat in the liberal interest for South Essex in the last Parliament. He married Margaret Maria Hammer, a sister of Sir John Hammer, Bart., and has an only son, Digby Hammer Richard Wingfield, Esq., who holds a commission in the Horse-Guards. The Hall, or Ladysons, or the White House, as it is sometimes written

in old documents, now the seat of R. B. W. Baker, Esq., was formerly a huge timber built erection, much of which was pulled down in the last century, and the remainder has been so encroached upon and changed by the more tasteful wand of the modern architect, that little of its antique character can now be traced. It has been lately considerably enlarged; and the grounds have also been re-arranged by Mr. Marnock, of London.

The church is a large and ancient structure, of the heavy pointed style of architecture. The doorway, and some remains of parts of the building, show that the original was of Saxon or Norman architecture, but of much smaller dimensions than the present. There is good reason to believe that it was rebuilt and enlarged by the munificence of the Hotoftes family, who were great benefactors to Orsett, one of whom, Thomas Hotoftes, left by will, in 1495, 40 acres of land in the adjoining parish of Horndon-on-the-Hill, for the use of the churchwardens of Orsett, after payment of the common fine of 40s. to the lord of the manor. This is recorded on an ancient brass plate affixed to the wall of the church, and the profits are applied in lieu of church rates. The north chancel, now belonging to the lord of the manor, and containing two monuments by Westmacott, was once a chantry, founded at a very early period by the same Thomas Hotofte, and which was valued, at the suppression, at £7. 16s. 8d. Its endowments were granted by Edward VI. to Clement Sisley. The Hotoftes were a noble family who long flourished here and at Knebworth, holding high offices in the country, and one of them was treasurer of the household to Henry VI. We look for some of the tombs of this ancient family in this holy fane, but we find them not. Records show that Robert Hotofte, and Thomasin his wife, were buried here in 1470; but it appears from an inspection made a hundred years ago, that time and the hard usage to which these relics were at one period subjected had not then left anything traceable of this monument. The church has of late years been thoroughly restored internally by the present rector, Rev. James Blomfield, with great taste and judgment. An east window of stained glass, to the late Mrs. Jane Baker, wife of Richard Baker, Esq., by Wailes of Newcastle, has been put in within the last few years, and also two on the south side, to the memory of the second daughter of the present rector and a son who died in India. One of these was put in by subscription amongst the poor and other inhabitants of the parish, as a testimony of the estimation in which he was held by the parishioners, and of their feeling for their rector and his family.

There are good schools in the parish for boys, girls, and infants. The school for boys was founded by Edward Anson in 1776, and endowed by him with a farm of 23a. at Thoydon Garnon, and the residue of his personal estate, the latter of which was invested in £1,300. Three per Cent. Reduced Annuities, and £350. New South Sea Annuities. A considerable addition was made by the munificence of Mrs. Baker, widow of R. Baker, Esq., in 1849. Six scholars are selected from Orsett, two from Horndon-on-the-Hill, two from Balphan, two from Mucking, two from Chadwell; these fourteen are clothed and provided with books; and other boys are admitted on payment of 1d. per week. The schools for girls and infants are supported by voluntary contributions; and the whole are in a large and substantial building erected within the last ten years. In addition to the land bequeathed by Hotofte, there are,

Hemming's charity consisting of a moiety of the following property; 25A. of land called Mobbs Land and Pye Corner; a house near the church; and some buildings in Northumberland-alley, London, let on lease; this was left by Alice Hemming in 1639, a quarter to be distributed amongst the poor, and a quarter for a lecture every Sunday in the church: the other moiety goes to Chadlington in Oxfordshire. The other charities are, the dividends of £117. 2s. 7d. stock, purchased with money left by Richard Baker in 1827, for bread at Christmas, for the poor not receiving parish relief; a charge on 8A. of land, left by John Blatch in 1721, for forty sixpenny loaves to the poor; the dividends of £200. stock, left by Elizabeth Dowsett in 1807, half to the indigent and half to schooling poor girls; a rent-charge of £3. out of Heath-place, left by John Freeman in 1746 for monthly doles of bread; a rent-charge of £4. 10s., left by Ambrose Gilbert in 1642, for distributions to the poor at Christmas and Easter; £13. 10s. out of Giffords Cross, Corringham, left by Jasper Kinsman in 1700, for a weekly distribution of sixpenny loaves; the dividends of £73. 16s. 3d. stock, from the bequest of Jesse Newcome in 1813, for bread at Whitsuntide; the dividends of £146. 15s. 9d. stock, purchased with money left by Lady Trafford Southwell in 1809, for distribution of bread on the 3rd of May; and the dividends of £450. stock, left by Sarah Bush in 1825, for distribution of coals on the 1st of January; also the interest of £1,000. Three per cent. Consols, left by Mrs. Baker, for coals for the poor, in 1849. Payment of a rent-charge of £5. out of a house and blacksmith's shop at Baker-street, left to the poor by William Corbett in 1782, has been withheld for the last 40 years, on the ground that it is void under the statute of mortmain.

**HORNDON-ON-THE-HILL** is seen from afar on the high ground to the south-east. It is a neat little rural village, and its lofty position gives it the command of delightful views, extending on a clear day along the whole sweep of the Thames from London down to Sheerness, with the towns and hamlets scattered along the Essex border, and on the opposite coast of Kent. The delightfulness of the situation, and the command it afforded of the surrounding country, probably attracted the early inhabitants and conquerors of the land; and some historians notice a vague belief that it was once a place of more note than we now find it—one of the little cities of olden days. We find no evidence of this, except that it had a market on Saturdays; and not long since two wool fairs were held here, one in June and the other in July. The manor of Arden Hall belongs to — Theobald, Esq., and Malgrave's to R. B. W. Baker, Esq. The church, which of old belonged to the nunnery of Barking, stands in the centre of the town; and amongst its ancient monuments is, or was, one in great decay, with this inscription, seemingly dedicated by a lady to her husband:—

"Take, gentle marble, to thy trust,  
And keep unmix'd, this sacred dust;  
Grow moist sometimes, that I may see  
Thou weep'st in sympathy with me.  
And when by him I here shall sleep,  
My ashes also safely keep.

And from rude hands preserve us both, until  
We rise to Sion Mount from Horndon-on-the-Hill."

There are two acres of church land; the market-house, given by John Poley, in 1734, is occupied by poor; and for the indigent there is a rent-charge of 20s. out of a farm at Mucking, left by Elisabeth Downes.



To the left of us, as we stand at Horndon-on-the-Hill, lies **BULPHAN**, with its lands descending to a fen or moor on the west, and up which, tradition tells, the tide once flowed so strongly that boats sailed by to places further inland. Beyond it is the little village and parish of **DUNTON**, which belonged to Bee Abbey, in Normandy, from the conquest to the suppression of priories' alien, and has since been held by King's College, Cambridge. Frien is part of the property of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Below us to the southward is a line of parishes extending along the river-side from Tilbury Fort up to Rochford Hundred, with lowlands and marshes falling to the water, while here and there the little villages and churches are seen planted picturesquely on the high lands above. The first of these is **MUCKING**, which was held by the Abbey of Barking from the days of the Saxon to the dissolution, when it was granted to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's, who are still the lords of the manor and the owners of great part of the soil. In the aisle of the church is a monument to Elizabeth Downes, with an inscription recording that she "lived in happy matrimony with four several husbands," three of whom slumber by her side, and the fourth announces at the foot that he was at the expense of raising this tomb over them.\* **STANFORD-LE-HOPE** is the next parish: with its lands and manor-houses many of the powerful old families of the land appear to have been connected, as in the windows of its ancient church there formerly appeared the arms of Valence, Montchensey, Vere, Hastings, Lacy, Mandeville, Fitzmaurice, Tany, Gernon, and others. The chief manors are now held by the Scratton family.†

**CORRINGHAM** was long the home of the noble and knightly family of Baud, which flourished in the days of chivalry, and appears to have held property here under the Bishop of London in the time of Domesday record. Several of these knights dwelt at the Hall; and Sir John De Baud, about 1346, obtained a grant of a market and a fair at Corringham. In 1375 Sir William De Baud had leave from the dean and canons of St. Paul's to lay into the hall part of their lordship of West Lee, on the yearly payment of a buck and a doe, which, Dugdale records, were rendered with ludicrous ceremonies—

"The doe was offered January 25, the day of the Conversion of St. Paul, and the buck June 29, the day of the Commemoration of St. Paul, in the following form:—The buck and doe were brought on these several days by one or more of the fitting servants of the family and not the whole family, at the hour of the procession, and through the midst thereof, and offered at the high altar; after which the persons that brought the buck received of the dean and chapter, by the hands of their chamberlain, twelve pence sterling for their entertainment, but nothing when they brought the doe. The buck being brought to the steps of the high altar, the dean and chapter, apparelled in copes and proper vestments, with garlands of roses on their heads, sent the body of the buck to be baked, and had the head and horns fixed on a pole before the cross in their procession round about the church till they issued out at the west door, where the keeper that brought it blowed the death of the buck, and then the horns that were about the city answered him in like manner, for which they had each of the dean and

\* The poor have a rent-charge of £6. 13s. 4d. left by the Elizabeth Downes referred to, in 1607, out of New Jenkin's Farms; £4. a year out of Blue House Farm, left by John Ladd, for the church and poor; and 10s. out of land at Orsett, left by Ann Gray, in 1722. Twenty-five years ago these charities had fallen into long arrear, and the parties then denied their liability.

† There is a free-school in the parish founded by Elizabeth Davison, in 1789, who endowed it with property after the death of her relatives; this property, on the death of the last survivor, in 1826, amounted to £1,250 stock. The poor's land consists of one acre; the other charities are a rent-charge of £2 out of Earls Hope; the rents of a house and orchard at Fobbing; the dividends of £100 stock, left by John Pain, in 1798; and £1 a year was left by Elizabeth Downes, out of her charity at Mucking.

chapter fourpence in money and their dinner, and the keeper, during his stay, meat, drink, and lodging, and five shillings in money at his going away, together with a loaf of bread, having on it the picture of St. Paul. This ceremony continued till Queen Elizabeth's days."

Mr. Wingfield Baker is the lord of Corringham Hall. The poor's land consists of 2A. 1R. 10P.

FOBHING, a good village, and once, it is said, a considerable town, stands on an acclivity above several creeks, which run inland, near the spots known to frequenters of the river as Hole-haven and Shellhaven, at the latter of which the Thames Haven Docks were to have arisen. The sea formerly ran up to Fobbing, but there is now a considerable extent of flats between it and the water. Stow asserts that Jack Cade's rebellion originated in this village; and he adds, that the mob broke into a neighbouring priory, where they "drunk up three tons of wine, and devoured all the victuals." It is probable that when that redoubtable chieftain commenced his movements tumults occurred in this waterside district, which was likely to be infected by the discontent in Kent; but we know not what priory can be referred to, unless it be that of Prittlewell, which is some miles distant. The lofty tower of Fobbing church forms a conspicuous object in the scene as viewed from the Kentish hills; and from the village there are delightful prospects along the wide vale of the Thames.

VANGE stands to the north of Fobbing, at the head of a creek. Below it are PITSEA, with its church on a delightful eminence, and BOWERS GIFFORD, of which Major Spitty is the lord; two similar parishes, both reached by creeks navigable from the river, and each containing a part of Canvey Island.

The next parishes are the BEMFLEETS, NORTH and SOUTH, constituting one parish in the early ages; the first, as we have seen, (page 24), a common landing place, and afterwards the site of a castle of the Danes. "Hœsten, the Danish rover," says an old writer, "built about the year 893 a castle or fortification at Bean-Fleet, wherein he used to lay up his plunder, and kept a large garrison. But in 894 King Alfred drove away the garrison, demolished the castle, and took Hœsten's wife and two sons prisoners, with all the booty, and carried them to London." The site of this fortress was the eminence above the present railway station, sloping down to the village; and the Rev. W. E. Heygate, in the paper we have quoted relative to Shoebury, says—

"I fancy that I can even now trace the line of the works round the south-west side of the hill. At any rate there is an indentation in the soil which might very well be the last trace of an earthen wall. It is said that there are foundations of a castle in an orchard on the north side, but these probably belong to a work which subsequently guarded the creek, and which is reported to have been originated by Alfred. Other traces I know not."

The dean and chapter of Westminster are the lords and owners of the manor of the Abbey, in which they succeeded the abbot of Westminster, to whom the property was given by the Conqueror. This parish includes a large part of Canvey Island, a marshy district, lying opposite in the estuary of the Thames, six miles in length, from one to 2½ miles broad, and containing 3600 acres of rich grazing land. It is divided between the parishes of South and North Bemfleet, Bowers, Pitsea, Vange, Laindon, Leigh, Prittlewell, and Southchurch. It is reached by a raised causeway across the creek, which is fordable at low water. Prior to 1622, the whole island was subject to be frequently overflowed by the tide, and the proprietors agreed to give a Dutchman

named Joas Croppenburgh one-third of the land, on condition that he should, at his own cost, protect the whole by embankments. He accordingly first formed the sea-walls, which now effectually secure it from the inroads of the sea, except occasional floodings of some parts of it at very high tides, which enrich rather than deteriorate it. The little wooden chapel erected for the Dutchmen employed in the works has swelled into a church, dedicated to St. Catherine, and the benefice is a perpetual curacy. There are about 100 persons who dwell on the island, the soil of which belongs to the Spitty and other families.

We have now traversed the river side up to the verge of Rochford Hundred; and turning inland we ascend the high grounds to THUNDERSLEY, with its church, which is partly Norman and partly early English, standing in a clump of stately trees on a picturesque hill top. Great part of the parish was at one period a park attached to the Honor of Rayleigh; and there is evidence, from the relics of other ages which the spade has brought up—several within the last few years—that it was part of a Roman settlement in the district, and attractive, as an occasional residence at least, to the ancient Britons.

Continuing our inland route, and skirting Rochford Hundred along the borders of Rayleigh and Rawreth, we reach WICKFORD, and passing its ancient church on the rising ground, descend to the neat village below, which is nearly encompassed by branches of the Crouch. This parish, which appears to have been an extensive one at the time of the survey, was principally attached to the lordship of Rayleigh; and there are still two “geld-ables,” as they were called of old, or districts in other parishes, which pay their taxes to the collector here. These geld-ables are not uncommon in the county, and are believed to represent outlying property on which the great owners of the parish—in this case Bishop Odo and Suene—had laid thievish hands. The manor of Wickford Hall, once held by the Plantagenets, now belongs to J. Fane, Esq. Stilemans, once a noble mansion towards Runwell, was taken down many years ago. The devastating epidemic which in the last century swept the county of its horned cattle, is stated to have originated in the farm of a Mr. Howlet, in this parish.

To the north of the road, as we proceed onward to Billericay, lies DOWNHAM, with its few scattered houses and farm homesteads, and its antique little church, half concealed amongst groups of venerable trees on a noble hill, which commands a vast expanse of the surrounding country. Close below is a remnant of the Hall, once part of the possessions of the De Vere family. In 1714 it was purchased by Osmond Beauvoir, Esq., who resided here, and was sheriff of the county in 1742. The estate is still in the representatives of his family. Only a remnant, however, of the mansion remains, it having been demolished some years ago. Yonder farm-house is Tremnals, which in 1476 was held by the Tyrell family, and was afterwards the seat of Benjamin Disbrow, son of Major-General Disbrow, brother-in-law of Cromwell, who, when the wild passions of the time stirred the nation, emerging from the quiet retreat of a country yeoman, made his influence felt in the council, and left the track of his regiment of horse over many a battle-field. By an ancient custom, if any person paying quit-rents to Tremnals neglected to do so by twelve o'clock the day they were due, the amounts doubled every hour. If we turn into the church we find the tombs of many of the former occupants of these manors—the Tyrells, the Platts, the Disbrows—and

a fine tomb of black marble, by the south wall, on Sir Thomas Raymond, one of the judges of the court of Queen's Bench, who died while on circuit at Chelmsford, and was buried here in 1683. The poor have £2. 5s. a year, part of a rent-charge of £9. out of land at Crows heath, left by Lady Cæsar, in 1635.

The next parishes in this tract are the RAMSDENS, which were known by this common name at the time of the survey. They are two pleasant villages, with lands in some parts of a heathy character. Ramsden Bellhouse was anciently the property of the Belhouse and Barrington families, and the two manors bear their names. Attached to the latter was a free chapel at Nymph Green, called Barnstons, but it long ago disappeared. The church is a small ancient structure; the rectory is consolidated with that of Stock. The twin parish, which lies upon the high-road, has a pleasant village, with a picturesque hamlet at Crays Hill, and a good mansion called Three Ash Cottage, the seat of T. B. Batard, Esq., the lord of the united manors. There are two acres of church-land in Ramsden Bellhouse, and the poor have £1. 5s. from Lady Cæsar's charity.

To the south of the high road, as we have traversed this district, we have passed NEVENDON, a small parish lying in a valley; the large hamlet of Basildon; and, on the high grounds above, the twin parishes of the Laindons. BASILDON is now united ecclesiastically as a chapelry to Laindon; but formerly, if the lowly whispering voice of old tradition may be credited, it was the site of an independent and populous town. An enclosure near the church has long gone by the name of Town Field, and in it the plough has often struck upon works which appear to be the buried foundations of ancient buildings; in the parsonage garden bones were formerly dug up in quantities too great to have been those of the rude forefathers of a little hamlet. In 1418 we find a grant by Henry V., of "the Halle of Bealstable, with appurtenances," to Thomas Bresyngham—a name which nowhere appears as a possessor of the manor, so that this is presumed to have been a public edifice; and as the Hundred is stated to have derived its name from Barstaple Hall, an estate here, it may be reasonably conjectured that this quiet scene, in which the eye finds only a few scattered farm-houses and corn fields, was at one period the metropolis of the district, in which the courts were held and the public business transacted. This receives some confirmation from the fact that the lord of this manor often held the Hundred under the crown. LAINDON, or Laindon Clays, was in the see of London at the time of the survey, and has ever since been held by the Bishops, one of whom, in 1291, had enclosed his demesne lands here, and formed a park "within the bounds of the forest of Essex."\* We have now partly climbed the range of lofty highland. Ascending to the summit, we stand in the parish of LAINDON HILLS, and there lies unrolled before us (as described page 4) one of the most beautiful views in the county, aye, in the kingdom, for it was long ago observed "Essex may justly boast here of the grandest prospect in England." The rich vale of the Thames, to which the steep hill-side falls abruptly,—the river with its shipping—the grim battlements of the fort at Tilbury, with the signs of the city which they guard seen dimly beyond—and the opposite coast of Kent traceable up to the Medway, form altogether a scene worthy of

\* From a farm left by John Puckle, in 1617, £20. is paid to the master of the school, £1. for a sermon on St. John's day, and £25. for distribution in clothing and coals; the poor have also a charge of £4. a year, given by an unknown donor, out of the Vineyard, at Fobbing.

the pilgrimage of the picnic party whom we found seated beneath the tree which stands on the topmost crown of the hill, enjoying the prospect, and worshipping Nature on this her high altar. The chief manor of the parish belongs to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's, as also that of West Lee,—the latter being formerly a parish of itself, but was joined to Laindon in 1432, the poverty of the two places being alleged as the reason of the union. An estate here, consisting of two farms, was given by Dr. White in 1621, as an endowment for a professorship of moral philosophy, and five scholarships which he founded at Oxford.

**LEE CHAPEL**, or East Lee, is a small extra-parochial district by the side of Laindon Hills, consisting of a farm and eleven inhabitants. It is the site of an ancient chapel, built, it is believed, for a chantry, and endowed with lands held of the king. The little Liberty was once in the Petre family, but it now belongs to the Gambiers.

**BURSTEAD AND BILLERICAY**.—A little way inland from Laindon, but commanding in some parts of it fine views of the river, lies **GREAT BURSTEAD**; and on the high grounds overlooking a rich district, stands its hamlet, or chapelry, of **BILLERICAY**, a handsome market town, at the present time the only one in the Hundred. This spot was one of the links by which the Roman riveted his rule upon the land. Camden, indeed, believed that it was the *Cæsaromagus* of the old itinerary; but this is simply a theory unsupported by proof. The generally received and most probable conclusion is, that two Roman military ways formed a junction here, one passing in the direction of Tilbury, and the other to Ongar; and that at **Blunts Walls**, a farm a mile to the west, stood a small fortress, garrisoned by a detachment of the occupying legions, for the protection of these communications. Morant, and other writers of his time, state that the ditch and a considerable part of the ramparts then existed, the latter rising high above the level of the fields, and enclosing about four acres, including part of the farm yard, and within it traces of artificial mounts were to be seen; but these works of the men of the sword have now utterly vanished, and their site has been given to the plough-share. Their memory, however, has been preserved in the name of the farm—**Blunts Walls** being derived from the ancient family of *Le Blund*, which once owned the property, and these military walls or earth works. But though these proofs of the presence of the Romans have disappeared, others have turned up in the parish from time to time. At **Mill Hill** have been found black earth and ashes, broken fragments of various kinds of earthenware vessels, and the remains of ovens, indicating the site of an imperial pottery. Coins in large quantities have been discovered at **Tiled Hall**; urns, *pateræ*, *amphoræ*, *lachrymatories*, and fragments of other vessels have been exhumed near the union-house, and in other parts of the parish, showing that Roman habitations had sprung thickly up about **Burstead** and **Billericay** under the protection of the fortress at **Blunts Walls**. **Great Burstead** was the chief lordship which Bishop **Odo**, half-brother of the Conqueror, held in this county. It afterwards passed to the monks of **Stratford Abbey**; and the **Grange**, now the farm of **Mrs. Barnard**, was the house to which they fled (see page 455) when the floods routed them from their marshy cells. In 1253 the holy fathers obtained from **Henry III.** a grant of a market and a fair at **Great Burstead**, which was renewed by **Edward I.**; and in 1476 **Edward IV.** granted them a market and two fairs at **Billericay**—probably in substitution of the others, the hamlet having then grown into the place of most importance—and this mart has continued to



be held till the present day. On the dissolution of the Abbey the Grange was granted to Lord Rich. Of his posterity it was purchased in 1600 by Sir John Petre—Sir William having bought Blunts Walls of Henry VIII., in 1554, for £191. 19s. 5d.—so that the Petres became lords of the parish and owners of most of the lands, excepting West House, which, after passing through the Rich and other families, now belongs to Guy's Hospital.

BILLERICAY, though only the hamlet, can boast a handsome street and a good market-house. The church, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, occupies the site of an ancient chapel, originally founded as a chantry, but afterwards applied to the purposes of parochial worship for the inhabitants. It is conjectured that it was erected in the early part of the fourteenth century by the Sulyards. The following is the entry in reference to it in the Book of Chantries:—

"Burstead-Magna.—Lands and Tenements there put in feoffment by divers persons to the sustentacon and maintenance of a priest to sing Masse, and also to minister Sacraments within the Chapple of Burstead-Magna, which said Chapple is distant from the parish Church a mile and a quarter. The said Towne of Bursteds ys a great Towne and populous, and also a Haven town. There ys in it by estimacon about the numb: of 600 howseling people and more. Yt ys no Parish, but the Incumbent celebrateth in the said Chapple of Much-Bursted. The yerely valew of the same worth 88s. 4d. For 2 messuages and certain lands thereunto belonging copihold of the Lord Rich, La. Chancellor, as of his maner of Burgsted aforesaid, doth amount to the some of £9. 10s. 6d., whereof in rent-resolute to divers Lords by the yere £1. 6s. 3d., and to the Lord Rich for the copihold 8s. 8d."

In Bishop Bonner's Register there is a passage to the effect that, in regard of the inundations of the waters in the winter time, when the inhabitants of the western parts of the hamlet of Billericay could not conveniently come to their parish church of Ging Mountney, the vicar of Great Burghstead should receive the small tithes and oblations of Blunts Walls. From this it may almost be inferred that in ordinary cases these tithes were payable to the chapel at Billericay; but the lands are now altogether free. When the chantries were suppressed, both chapel and endowment fell to the crown, and Edward VI. sold them to Mr. Tyrell, who kept the lands and disposed of the chapel to the inhabitants. It was vested by them in trustees, and appears to have been nearly rebuilt. A doubt, however, arose as to the consecration; the trustees resigned it to the Bishop of London, who consecrated it in 1693, "with all the usual privileges belonging to an ancient chapel," but reserving all its rights to the mother church. The benefice is now a perpetual curacy, and a great part of its income is derived from pew rents.

The mother church of Great Burstead has some interesting features about it, amongst them a pointed arch at the north door, with rich mouldings, and two ornamental niches, which probably in Roman Catholic times contained the images of saints, on the south side of the communion table. There is a school in the parish called a grammar school, endowed with a farm of 74A. 4P., at Laindon, for teaching poor children, given by Samuel Bayly, in 1692; and the school attached to the dissenting chapel is also endowed with £580. stock, left by James Mabbs, in 1773.—The charities for the poor are, £4. a-year from Puckle's charity; the interest of £100. left by Thomas Blatch, in 1800, for distribution in bread; the dividends of £166. 13s. 4d. stock, left by Dr. J. Jenner, in 1827, for coals and bread at Christmas; the rent of two acres of pasture land called the Poor's Field; the dividends of £100. stock, left by James Chaplin, in 1830; and the interest of £100. for five poor widows, left by Ann



Abbott, in 1759: the latter appears not to have been invested, and the charity commissioners found it had not been paid since 1831.

LITTLE BURSTEAD, a scattered village to the west, was once principally in the Tyrell family, but J. Alan Lowndes, Esq., is now the lord. The church is a little ancient fabric. Amongst the monuments which it contains is one to Admiral Walton—of a family long seated in this parish—who distinguished himself by the destruction of the Spanish fleet off Messina, in 1718.

The charities of the parish consist of 33A. 33P. of land; a house and five cottages, vested in trust by John Cowper, about 1600, for the benefit of poor parishioners not receiving parochial alms; 20s. a year from St. Pancras, London, left by Thomas Chapman, in 1626; and a rent-charge of 3s. out of Bullers, left by Mary Fiske, about 1707.

A few miles on the road towards Brentwood is the pleasant little village of HURTON. In Roman catholic times it belonged to Battle Abbey—a present to that house from the Conqueror; but the manorial rights, and much of the soil, are now owned by R. Scholey, Esq.\* Further on is SHENFIELD, upon the great high road, its village being virtually a suburb of Brentwood. Records show that there was a village here in the time of Edward the Confessor, and Roman remains which have been turned up carry back its history as a habitable spot to the early dawn of the Christian era. Its church, too, bears the marks of great antiquity. Earl De Grey is the lord, and there are several good seats in the parish; but Fitzwalters, its finest mansion, anciently held by the tenure of presenting a pair of gilt spurs to the king at the coronation, was destroyed by fire upwards of twenty years ago.† The last parish in this direction is DODDINGHURST, situate at the extreme point of the Hundred, to the north of the high road and railway. It is an ancient parish of a purely rural character. The manors and most of the land belong to Colonel Fane and Mrs. Manbey.—The charities for the poor consist of a rent-charge of £4. left by Mrs. Herrys and Thomas Glasscock, out of an estate now held by Mrs. Manbey; the interest of £60. given by the Dawtreys family; and £30. by Hannah Luther and others; the rent of five acres of poors-land, purchased, in 1715, with poor's-money; and Pope's House, vested in trust for the residence of poor parishioners.

THORNDON HALL, THE SEAT OF LORD PETRE.—In skirting this extreme point of the Hundred from Billericay, we have passed on the left the stately domain of Thorndon, with its park, ornamental woodlands, and the cluster of parishes—East and West Horndon, and Ingrave, with the hamlet of Herongate—into which they extend, and may be said to almost absorb. As we retrace our steps, the mansion appears before us, about two miles from Brentwood, seated on a bold eminence, rising from the deep valley below, through which runs the railway. It is a fine architectural picture, the lordly dwelling set in the framework of an extensive park, with the dark clustering timber, amongst which herds of the red deer make their home, running fully two miles in a direction towards the river, whose waters are dimly seen in the distance. As we emerge from the shaded avenue on the large open lawn in front, we perceive that Thorndon Hall is indeed a noble pile—"a most princely palace,"

\* The charities consist of 8 acres of land, with one of wood, vested in trust for the poor by George White, in 1575; and the dividends of £1,000 stock, left for distribution amongst the poor, by Stephen Martin, in 1798.

† The poor have the dividends of £100. stock, purchased with £50. left by Eliza Holmes, in 1764, and £30. by Joseph Babb, in 1789.

as a writer described it just after its completion in the last century—worthy to be the home of a family which has flourished for so many centuries in the land. It is not, however, one of those olden halls whose antique pillars are wreathed in historical memories, and across whose stained floors we can trace the footstep of the fierce Norman of the days of feudalism. It may almost be said to be one of the elegant creations of our own time, having been finished little more than a century ago by the ninth baron of his race. The park is indeed of older date, as these giant oaks bear witness; and within it, but not at this spot, there stood an ancient manorial hall, probably inhabited by the De Tany's and the Fitzwilliams, and the Fitz-Lewis's, who were successively lords of the soil here. There is a tragical tale connected with the destruction of the old building. John, the last heir of the wealthy house of the Fitz-Lewis's, had wedded the daughter of Sir Robt. Lovel, on a fair day in June, some 400 years ago, and the event was celebrated by the guests in the hall, and the retainers upon the green sward, with all the free-hospitality of that time; but in the still night which followed the nuptial festival a fire broke out in the mansion, and when morning came nought was there but a mass of blackened ruins, and the charred bones of the bride and bridegroom in the midst. We find no record of the house having been rebuilt; but the property afterwards passed to the Petre family, probably about the latter part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and when it was resolved to abandon the ancestral home of Ingatestone Hall, Robert James Lord Petre commenced the erection of a family seat in the old park here. Considerable progress had been made; but as this stood on lower ground, his successor, Lord Robert Edward demolished it, and about the middle of the last century raised the Hall on its present site. The mansion is built of white brick, from designs by Paine. The front to the northward consists of a noble centre, with two extensive wings, connected by circular corridors. The whole is in excellent keeping; and though the eye is not dazzled by laboured architectural ornament, a fine effect is produced upon the mind as we approach the front by the vastness and chaste grandeur of the pile. On the south, raised on arches above the basement, is a portico, supported by six large fluted Corinthian pillars; and from this point, or the windows of the apartments above, rich views are commanded of the adjacent grounds, the outlying farms, villages, and woodlands, up to the Thames' side, as far as Gravesend, and the hills of Kent beyond.

It is not our purpose to attempt an itinerary of the interior as we travel over the spacious pile—through the principal apartments, in the furniture and fitting-up of which there is an air of chastened splendour—the winding passages, corridors, and numberless rooms above. We must content ourselves with a hurried glance at the general features, and the fine array of old family portraits which adorn the walls. The hall is a noble apartment, 40 feet square, with its roof supported by 18 columns, by Wyatt, resembling Sienna marble, and containing—almost its sole treasures of art—two very large and beautifully sculptured marble vases. In the boarded hall above, of equal dimensions, we come upon the massive and elaborately carved oaken chair of state in which sat George III., when he became the guest of this noble family, and held his court for a time in the hall of Thorndon (see page 169). Glancing around at the fine portraits of Charles I. and Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV. of France, by Vandyke; Julia, daughter of Henry Howard, by Gainsborough; and Mary and William Petre,

by Slater, we turn to the richly furnished drawing rooms, the larger of which is 38 feet by 26 feet. Here we find further memorials of the royal visit, as portions of the furniture with which they were fitted up still remain; and though the brocaded seats and the lavish gilding of the chairs are here and there touched by time, they have been well, and proudly, and loyally preserved. The walls of these splendid apartments, as also the fine dining, billiard, and breakfast rooms, present a profuse display of the rich works of the painter's hand, principally portraits of historical and family interest. Above the mantel-piece of the dining room, is a fine work, combining, in one picture, and of almost life-size, Henry VIII. and his six wives, said to be all faithful likenesses. Turning, we gaze upon the form of Mary Queen of Scots, asserted to be an original painting of her, devoid of the imaginary touches which subsequent artists have given to her features; but to our mind it does not fully bear out the fatal and enticing beauty in which history has clothed her. Here, too, are portraits of Charles II., James II., and the Duke of Monmouth, by Lely; and another upon which we gaze with a melancholy feeling—James, Earl of Derwentwater, beheaded in 1716 for participation in the Scottish rebellion—the last of our nobles who was executed for a political offence. As we traverse another part of the mansion we are shown a chest containing the garments in which he died upon the block, preserved as sad souvenirs of the perished family, with which that of Petre was connected by marriage.\* Among the other paintings upon which the eye rests as we proceed through this suite of rooms, are Sir William Petre (1567); the family of Sir Thomas Moore at a learned consultation, by Holbein; the fourth Lord Petre (1630); Robert, Lord Petre, when a child, by Hersbourn; Lady Mary Tudor, and Francis, second Earl Derwentwater, by Lely; a Nun, by Le Bel; Lady Petre, in the dress of a shepherdess, by Wissing; Anne Howard, by Angelica Hauffman; the Earl of Darnley, by Zuccherro; the Earl of Essex (1592); and Father Edward Petre (1631), whose name is well known from being mixed up with the troubled political history of his time. The saloon, too, which is 60 feet long by 30 broad, but with its walls and arched roof still rough and unfinished as they came from the builder's hands—the state and other bed rooms, we find similarly enriched with works of art. The whole range of upper apartments is fire proof, and the eight staircases leading to them are of stone. There are two libraries; the principal one, formed over the east corridor, and assuming the shape of a semi-circular gallery, is a splendid apartment, with its walls adorned by white fluted pilasters, chastely gilt, the whole of one side richly stored with "learning's varied tomes," and its range of windows commanding extensive views far away to the southward. The lower library is devoted to a most interesting collection of ancient works, illuminated missals, and the literature of mediæval days. We must here pause in our perambulations. But ere

\* One of the chapels in which the body rested was at Dagman Park, near Romford, the house which Lady Derwentwater rented during her lord's imprisonment. At Ingatestone there was a few years ago, in an almshouse founded by Lord Petre's family, an old woman who had frequently heard from her mother that she assisted in sewing on the Earl's head. At Thorndon (Lord Petre's seat) there is an oaken chest with an inscription of brass engraved by Lady Derwentwater's orders, containing Lord Derwentwater's dress which he wore on the scaffold—coat, waistcoat, and small clothes of black velvet; stockings that rolled over the knee; a wig of very fair hair that fell down on each side of the breast; a part of his shirt, the neck having been cut away; the black serge that covered the scaffold; and also a piece which covered the block, stiff with blood, and with the mark of the cut of the axe in it.—*Memoir of the last Earl of Derwentwater.*

we quit the mansion we turn again to the eastern wing, and enter the beautiful little Roman Catholic chapel, in which the household of the noble family worships; for the Petres, as we have already shown in the historical record of the house, have, since the death of Sir William, its founder, clung steadily to the old faith, through the buffetings of persecution and the ban which it was once the fashion of the law to place upon its professors. And their piety has shown itself in the rich fitting up and adornment of their little home sanctuary, within whose gilded walls they have placed some of their choicest works of art. Above the magnificent altar is a large painting of the Nativity, by David; the Ascension, and the Agony in the Garden; and at the sides are two fine little gems recently brought from Rome. The walls are blue, white, and gold, and a range of niches on one side is filled with saintly statues. With the light subdued and chastened by the stained glass of the windows, the artistic effect is most striking on entering this little domestic temple.

Traversing the winding walk to the south-west of the mansion, a sudden turn brings us in front of a small cemetery chapel, half hidden from us before by sheltering trees and shrubs, which has been recently erected over a new family vault, the long continuous line having filled up the receptacle at Ingatestone church with its noble dead. The body of the building is of Kentish rag, but there is a beautiful little tower of wrought stone, richly and profusely ornamented. At the east end is a noble stained glass window, beneath which stands the funereal altar; and in the centre of the floor, a large black marble slab, finely inlaid with a commemorative brass, covers the chamber of the dead, in which sleep the last lord, and we believe another member of the family. Wealth has opened widely its hand, art has freely lavished its treasures, in the interior decorations of the beautiful little structure; and there is an air of appropriate solemnity thrown around the place by the architectural ornaments and the exquisite basso-relievi, all emblematical of the associations, the consolation, and the hopes

“Which sweet religion wreathes around the grave.”

Encircling the building is a space of neatly-kept turf; and here the green mounds of the retainers of the estate, and some of the humbler inhabitants of the neighbouring hamlets, are already beginning to cluster round the lordly tomb.

In EAST HORNDON, Heron Hall, an object of interest to the antiquary, with its grim-looking brick edifice surrounded by a moat, was long since destroyed to make way for a modern farmhouse. For centuries after the Tyrells of Heron Hall were of high repute and standing in the county. Eventually this estate passed from them to the Earl of Arran, by marriage. Abbots, which was part of the possessions of Waltham Abbey, has been since 1544 in the Petre family. In the church were chapels of the Petre and the Tyrell families. Some of the inscriptions over the ancient tombs of the latter still survive, but battered and partially obliterated; among them is the following in Latin, on Sir John Tyrell, who adhered to Charles I., and suffered severely for his loyalty:—

“Upon him once decimated, twice imprisoned, thrice sequestered, he holds his peace as oft as plundered. Here lieth buried John Tyrell, knight. He died on Tuesday, in the year 1645, aged 82.”

There is no church in West Horndon, as the parish was consolidated with Ingrave in 1734; soon after, both the old churches were taken down, and in 1738 Robert Lord Petre at his own charge erected a new one for the united parishes. In Ingrave there is a house and 1A. 32. of land, given by an unknown donor.

## Clavering Hundred.

This, the smallest Hundred in the county, lies on the north-western side, bounded on the west and south by Hertfordshire. It includes the following six parishes :

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Clavering .....	The Saxon word signifying violets, and <i>ing</i> , a meadow; violet meadow .....	3798	1220	£. 5601	£. s. d. 504 14 4	£. s. d. 466 1 8
Barden .....	<i>Bere</i> , corn, and <i>den</i> , a valley ...	1771	418	2038	260 0 0*	
Farnham .....	Fern or heath, and <i>ham</i> , a village; heath village .....	1966	558	2718	615 0 0	
Langley .....	<i>Lang</i> , long, and <i>ley</i> , pasture; long pasture .....	1617	483	1692	156 7 0	156 15 0
Manewdon .....	Saxon words <i>Mæne</i> , common, and <i>den</i> , valley; common valley .....	2466	752	4009	629 0 0	201 0 0
Ugley .....	Corruption of Oakley .....	2038	450	2673	372 18 9	100 5 0

\* The benefice is a perpetual curacy, value £150.

The Hundred comprises the narrow tract of land lying on the north side of the railway between Bishop Stortford and Newport, extending about nine miles, but not more than four, and in some places only two in breadth. This lordship was part of the possessions of Suene; and Claveringbury Castle was of some note as one of the strongholds of feudal days. It gave name to the family of De Clavering, which dwelt here; and at different periods it was in the hands of various noble owners, till it came, through a grant of Queen Mary, to the Barringtons, of Hatfield Broad Oak. The castle, which stood near Clavering church, fell with the feudalism it represented and upheld. For some ages it lay desolate. A century ago the last vestiges of its walls disappeared. The only foot-prints left by the ancient lords of Clavering are traces of the works around the area of their castle home, and of the deep trench by which it was defended. Sir G. T. Staunton, the Rev. J. M. Simkinson, and A. Majendie, Esq., are the lords of the parish, and part of the soil is owned by Lady Franklin, the widow of the Arctic voyager, the memory of whose self-sacrificing devotion and successful perseverance will go down to other ages linked with the record of her husband's heroism. Clavering is a pleasant village, situate near the source where the river Stort takes its rise.\* **LANGLEY**, though sometimes called a parish, is only a hamlet or chapelry of Clavering. The Lawn, or Clavering Park, as it was once called, long the seat of the Nightingale family, is now a farm-house; and the Rev. J. M. Simkinson is lord of the manor. There is £214. 1s. 5d. stock, for the repair of the church, purchased with money left by Martha Cramond, in 1814. The poor have 13s. from Martin's charity, and a share of Barlee's charity for apprenticing poor boys. A rent-charge of £1., for twenty labourers, was left by -- Collin out of Prentice Closes, but it is not paid.

\* The charities for the poor consist of a barrel of white and a cade of red herrings, out of Valence Farm, left by John Thake, in 1537; £1. 6s. from Martin's charity; the rent of Darnells, 7 acres of land, purchased with money left by John Smith, in 1680; 10s. out of Priests Farm, left by an unknown donor; £3. out of Thurrocks and Clavering-bury Farms, given by Archbishop Whitgift and Margaret Fulwelly; and a share from Barlee's charity, left for this and other parishes.



The neighbouring parish of BERDEN was once the site of a small priory, founded, it is believed, by the family of Rochford, of Rochford Hall, in the beginning of the reign of Henry III., for monks of the order of St. Augustine. It was endowed with the rectory, and lands in the surrounding districts; and, in 1236, the prior had license to hold a fair. At the Reformation, when its revenues were valued at £31. 5s. 1d., it shared the common fate. Its lands were granted away; and in 1583 they were given by Sir Thomas Ramsey to St. Thomas's, Bridewell, and Christ's Hospitals, to whom the property and tithes now belong; but the manor of Berden Hall, which, in Roman Catholic days, was part of the possessions of Walden Abbey, belongs to — Calvert, Esq., having been purchased by his ancestors about the year 1600. The north transept of the ancient little church is called the Priory-end; and this appears to be the last remnant of the monastic institution. Berden was the birthplace of one of our old divines, the Rev. Dr. Mede, who was born in 1586. He devoted his life to study in Christ's College, Cambridge; and his chief work, *Clavis Apocalyptica*, was pronounced by Bishop Hurd to be the first rational attempt to explain the Apocalypse. He died in 1638. The poor of Berden have 13s. a year from Martin's charity; the rent of nine acres of land, and two tenements; and there is a house belonging to the parish, occupied by paupers.

UGLEY, on the south—or Oakeley, as it appears to have been originally called, and which the Norman penman, in drawing up Domesday Book, tortured into Ugghlea,—is a straggling village on the road to Cambridge. It contains the chief mansion in the Hundred—Orford House, the seat of Major-General Chamberlayne. The house was originally built in the 17th century, by Admiral Russell, who was created Earl of Orford, in consequence of which it has ever since been called Orford House. It is an extensive building, with plantations and grounds well laid out. The present proprietor owns much of the land in the parish; but Robert Gosling, Esq., is lord of the manor of Ugley-Hall.\* MANEWDON, the next parish, is a pleasant village in the vale of the Stort, and has some farm homesteads which were once fine old manor houses. With Battails, one of them, there is a tragic tale connected. It was built by Sir Wm. Waad, son of the clerk to the council of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.—the English Columbus, as he was called, having been the first Englishman who discovered America. Of Sir William, the following history is supplied by the epitaph on his tomb in the little village church—

"Sir William Wead, knight, son of Armigild, secretary to the lady Elizabeth's privy council many years; sent *once* to the Emperor Roudolphus and to Philip king of Spain, and to Henry the Third, king of France; *thrice* to Henry the Fourth of France and Navarre, and *once* to Mary Queen of Scotland, on various affairs of the greatest importance; commissary general of England, and superintendent of the soldiery in Ireland, and also secretary to the privy council of our most serene lord King James; and lieutenant of the Tower of London eight years; afterwards living privately and religiously till his 77th year, died at his manor of Battleswood, in the county of Essex, on the 21st day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1623.

"You that have place and charge from Princes trust,  
Whom honors may make thankful, not unjust,  
Draw near and set your conscience and your care  
By this time-watch of state, whose minutes were  
Religious thoughts; whose howers heav'n's sacred foode,

\* The charities consist of 7a. 1r. 38p. of land left by John Buck in 1568, for clothing the poor—three poor men and three women are also clothed every third year, from Robert Buck's charity



Whose hand still pointed to the kingdom's good  
 And sovereign's safety, whom ambition's key  
 Never wound up guiltines, bribe, or fee;  
 Zeal only, and a conscience cleare and even,  
 Rais'd him on earth, and woon'd him up to heaven."

He was succeeded by his son, Capt. Waad, who in 1677 was decoyed from the mansion to the grounds, and was there assassinated by a man named Parsons, whom he had largely befriended, but refused to assist any further. One man, a confederate, was executed, but the actual murderer escaped, and afterwards obtained a pardon. A noted character in the locality, Betty Ainsworth, who kept the Rein Deer at Bishop Stortford, where the crime was planned, and to which the parties fled after its committal, was tried but acquitted. Of this personage, the narrative published at the time, says—

"This famous landlady had been carted out of Cambridge for a bawd, then settled at Stortford, and at length got into so good a plight as to entertain the nobility and foreign ambassadors between London and Newmarket, serving them in plate, with all the varieties they desired. She had once a frolic, still talked of in the town. The Prector of the University, who had driven her away, lodged one night at her house, with others whom the stage-coach had brought; they bespoke, as usual, their mutton and fowls; after which, to their great surprise, was served up a most elegant supper, all in plate, with Margoux and Pontax, which they were afraid to touch lest they should have a lord's reckoning to pay. Upon which the woman appeared, and said it was the least she could do in return of that gentleman's whipping her out, by which she had so much advanced herself."

This manor of Battails now belongs to Robt. Gosling, Esq., and Manewdon Hall to J. M. Leake, Esq., to whom it was left in 1831.

The poor have a rent-charge of 13s. 4d. out of the hall manor, given by Thos. Crawley in 1559; the rents of two cottages, left by Wm. Bull in 1569; of two tenements and a garden, left by John Jacklyn in 1659; of a house left by the Rev. T. Pakeman in 1675; of 10A. of Mill Common, purchased with £100, left by Thomas Parker in 1699; and of 6A. 1B., purchased with £100, left by Thos. Gardiner in 1709. Three poor men and three women are clothed every third year from Robert Buck's charity; and the rent of 2A. of land, purchased with £100, left by E. E. Southouse in 1812, is distributed in blankets.

FARNHAM, the last parish in the Hundred, adjoins to Bishop Stortford. The manor of the Hall, or Earlsbury and Walkfares, belong to C. T. Tower, Esq., and that of Hertishobury to R. Gosling, Esq. In 1634, Domesday Sedgwick, as he was called, who set up for a prophet, was rector here.

"One of his disciples," says Salmon, "went about the diocese of Ely, where Sedgwick had first made the people mad, foretelling the end of the world to be in a few days. Peter Gunning, the bishop, hearing that no persuasions would take him off, sent for him and offered him, for a small estate he had, two years' purchase, which he refused as not enough. It was, however, so plain a proof that he did not believe himself what he taught, that the long-eared rout deserted him."

The parish school is endowed with £1,500 stock, left by Wm. Ellis Gosling in 1828. The poor have distributed amongst them the rent of the Town Croft, 4A., and a rent-charge of £2 out of Walker's farm, left by Rowland Elliott.

Attlesford Hundred.

This Hundred contains the following 25 parishes, besides Saffron Walden, which will be treated of separately with the boroughs:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
				£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Takeley .....	<i>Teag</i> , enclosed land, and <i>ley</i> , a pasture .....	3154	991	4171	760 0 0	229 0 0
Arkesden .....	.....	2320	542	3011		"
Birchanger .....	<i>Birce</i> , birch, and <i>augre</i> , a place; birch place .....	1051	371	2893	236 5 8	
Gt. Chesterford }	A Roman castra or camp, and	3030	1024	5067	} †	
Lt. Chesterford }	the ford over the Cam .....	1260	272	1568		
Gt. Chishall ... }	.....	1410	582	2626		
Lt. Chishall ... }	<i>Cissa</i> , a Saxon chief; <i>Cissa's</i> hall .....	1420	105	1257	‡	
Chrishall.....	Christ's hall .....	2690	652	2697		214 0 0
Debden .....	The Saxon word <i>deop</i> , deep, and <i>den</i> , a valley.....	4404	1034	5077	1010 0 0	
Elmdon .....	Elm-Hill, from the quantity of elms .....	2480	743	3540	5406 16 3	
Elsenham .....	<i>Alsen</i> , an ancient owner, and <i>ham</i> , a village .....	1829	517	2172	4413 0 0	152 4 11
Haydon .....	The Saxon word <i>heah</i> , high, and <i>don</i> , a hill; high hill...	2470	368	1512	430 8 8	
Henham .....	<i>Hean</i> , high, and <i>ham</i> , a mansion; the high house .....	2958	911	6763	510 0 0	331 0 0
Littlebury .....	Little town .....	2300	934	6980	¶	
Newport.....	A new port or gate in the forest	1714	896	5208		114 10 0
Quenden .....	<i>Quena</i> , queen, and <i>den</i> , a hill; Queen's hill .....	643	199	1424	150 0 0	
Rickling .....	<i>Rickel</i> , a Saxon owner, and <i>ing</i> , a pasture; Rickel's pasture .....	1231	509	2041	272 0 0	125 0 0
Stansted Mountfitchet ... }	<i>Stan</i> , a stone, and <i>stede</i> , a place, and the ancient owner	4193	1719	8919	315 15 0	306 0 0
Strethall .....	The Saxon word <i>Strate</i> , a Roman military way .....	606	45	607	155 0 0	
Wendens Ambo }	The Saxon word meaning mole	1220	421	3224	¶	
Wenden Lofte .. }	and <i>don</i> , a hill; mole hill...	1520	89	726		
Wicken Bonant }	<i>Wic</i> , a farm or dairy, and <i>ham</i> , a house.....	841	156	1236	245 0 0	
Widdington ... }	The Saxon words <i>wid</i> , wide; <i>ing</i> , a meadow; and <i>ton</i> a town .....	2028	447	3662	570 0 0	
Wimblish with Thundersley ... }	<i>Gewin</i> , fair, and <i>Back</i> , a wood; fair or fine wood .....	4862	1004	5736	772 0 0	283 0 0

\* One hundred and fifty-one acres of land were assigned to the vicar on an enclosure in 1812, in lieu of tithes.  
† The rectorial tithes were commuted at the enclosure in 1819, for 470A. 2R. 32P. of land.  
‡ The vicarage of Great Chesterford and the rectory of Little Chesterford are consolidated; the former has 102A. 1R. 11P. of land, and the latter 206 acres allotted in lieu of tithes on an enclosure in 1804, when the impropiator of Great Chesterford had 521A. 2R. 84P. allotted him in lieu of great tithes.  
§ This includes Wenden Lofte, with which the parish is consolidated.  
¶ The tithes of Great Chishall were commuted for 187 acres of land in 1818; of Little Chishall 210A. 3R. 23P.; of Littlebury for 158 acres in 1801; and Wendens-Ambo for 117A. 2R. 18P.

The Hundred lies between that last described and those of Dunmow and Freshwell; at one point it touches upon Herts., and its extreme point borders upon Cambridgeshire. The old Roman military way known as Iken-street traversed part of the district; and the tract from Littlebury, through the Chesterfords, is rich with the remains of those imperial rulers of the land.

**TAKELEY**, the first parish at the western point of the Hundred, is a long straggling village formerly standing on the verge of the forest to which it gave name ; but nearly the last remnant of this tract of open land has within a few years been enclosed or laid into the park of Hallingbury Place. Much of the soil here was, in the early ages, in the hands of the monks. The Hall belonged to Waltham Abbey, and the abbots, amongst other privileges, had a market and the right of free warren here, though Takeley market has vanished even from the traditions of the parish. The manor of Colchester Hall was part of the property of St. John's Abbey, Colchester. St. Valery—or as it is commonly called, Warish Hall—was held by the brethren of St. Valery, in Picardy, and a small priory was founded here in the reign of Henry I., as a cell to the mother house, the prior being made the collector of all the rents of that monastery in England. On the seizure of the priories-alien, in the reign of Edward III. this manor, with the neighbouring parish of **BIRCHANGER**, which the monks also owned, was secured by William of Wickham, and made by him part of the endowment of New College, Oxford, in which they still remain. In the ancient little church is a strong room in which relics and images were kept for security in Roman Catholic times.

A little to the right, as we pass onward, lies **STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET**, one of the largest parishes in the county, being nearly forty miles in circumference—containing within its boundaries a good village, the remains of an ancient town, and slight traces of the once mighty castle of the Mountfitchets, whose frowning towers awed the country round. This was the head of the barony of that great Norman family which, in the plunder of the Saxons, secured 48 lordships in the county. It continued so, however, but for a short period. The last of the house died without issue in 1258 ; the estates were divided, the castle of Stansted coming afterwards into the possession of the De Vere, and it became a sort of dependency of their chief seat of Hedingham. Gradually it appears to have been demolished, or to have fallen to decay, as castles went out of fashion. A century ago some ruins of it remained, but these have disappeared or been overgrown ; and near a small rivulet which falls into the Stort, at the south-west part of the parish, we can with difficulty trace the spot where stood its towers, its dungeons, and its keep. In place of the castle, Stansted Hall rose up as the home of the modern lords of the parish—Sir Thomas Middleton, a city magnate, who purchased the estate in 1615 ; afterwards of the Heaths, and lastly of the Maitlands,—William Fuller Maitland, Esq., being the present owner of the manors. It was a fine old mansion, on a lofty hill near the church, commanding a wide extent of view ; but some years ago it was in turn deserted and demolished, save one of the towers, which still picturesquely crowns the height ; and Stansted House was erected not far distant. It is a large and elegant seat, surrounded by a fine park and pasture lands, and Mr. Maitland is much improving it. Bentfield hamlet, though over the border, in Clavering Hundred, is within this parish ; the manor belongs to R. Gosling, Esq. Of the priory of Thremhall, which stood about two miles south-east of the church, on the border of Hatfield Forest, the only remains are parts of a stone wall by a garden-side. This house was founded by Richard De Mountfitchet, for black Benedictine canons, and was well endowed by his family and by the Earl of Oxford. It possessed the great tithes of the parish, with rights and lands in many parts of the surrounding dis-

trict: and several of its noble patrons, the Mountfitchets, the De Veres, and the Barringtons, were buried within its walls. Its value at the suppression was £70. 19s. 3d. The church was a small interesting old relic. Up to about thirty years ago, the carved stalls in which the priests repeated their matins and chanted their vespers remained entire along the north side of the chancel; and on the south was a huge pew with sliding lattice-work, in which the penitent could pray, as in a cage. The sacred edifice, however, was considerably enlarged by a public subscription in 1829; and though a few of the carved seats, and a rudely sculptured font, evidently of great antiquity, have been left, much of its olden character vanished at the touch of the modern trowel. On the south side of the chancel is a richly-decorated monument, rising 20 feet high, to Sir Thomas Middleton, who was buried here in 1631; and if we may judge from the diffuse Latin inscription, he was the perfection of a man and a merchant, and the model of a Lord Mayor. There are several brasses in the church; one within the chancel bears the following, in old English characters:—

“Here lies Robert de Bohyngg, the first vicar of the parish church of Stansted Mechet, who died on the 22nd day of August, in the year of our Lord 1381.”

The charities of the parish consist of £2. out of Barker's Mead, left by Edward Hubbard, in 1593, for the use of the church; the rent of two acres of land, at Great Hallingbury, left for the poor by Eliza Cook, alias Chapman, in 1609; a rent-charge of £1. out of Revells, given by James and Harriet Browne, in 1610; the materials for clothing three poor men and three women once in three years, and 10s. each, from Robert Buck's charity; £2. 15s. out of a house and land at Bishop Stortford, given by Dionysius Palmer, in 1660, for bread for the poor; the rent of a cottage and barn, purchased with £100. left by Kitty Rush, in 1758, and £14. parish money; the dividends of £459. 9s. stock, purchased with £500. left by Maria Brent, in 1825; the rent of Battles Field, four acres, purchased with £60. left by Gertrude Peck, in 1723; and four of the oldest widows have 10s. from an acre of land at Birchanger, left by Elizabeth Cook, in 1604.

We may skim lightly over several of the parishes lying immediately below Stansted. As patient antiquarians we might love to stop and pore over every piece of musty parchment on which we find traces of the olden families of the district, and to grope our way amongst the dark aisles and battered tombs of the little village churches; yet, as popular exponents, we do not feel justified in pausing where we find nothing beyond the ordinary run of parish history.

To the right is the pleasant village of ELSENHAM, with its Hall, a brick embattled mansion, with delightful grounds and gardens and a beautiful sheet of water, the residence of the widow of George Rush, Esq., who was the lord; and an ancient church whose entrance bears about it interesting traces of Saxon architecture.\* Further on is HENHAM, in a high and healthy situation, near the chief source of the Cam, at whose Hall, now a farm-house, the noble family of the Fitzwalters dwelt for centuries. P. S. Feake Martin, Esq., is lord of this manor; and W. C. Smith, Esq., of Pledgdons, a hamlet

\* John Wells, in 1656, left three cottages and an orchard, for the rents to be distributed in cloth to the poor; and Thomas Rayner, in 1756, left £30., to assist in schooling poor children, but this has been lost.

† The charities consist of about £25. a year from Smith's charity, for clothing and apprenticing poor boys; the rent of a cottage and garden, and £8. a year given by the Rev. G. H. Glynn, in 1835; the dividends of £130. 18s. 7d., stock, purchased with

lying in Clavering Hundred.† QUENDON, to the left, a village on the Newmarket road, was for the last century principally the property of the Cranmer family. The Hall, a handsome mansion in the Elizabethan style, standing in a finely wooded park, is occupied by Captain Byng, whose first wife was niece to the late Mrs. Cranmer. The house was built by Thomas Newman, Esq., who obtained the estate in 1533; from him it takes the name of Newman Hall; but it was rebuilt in the seventeenth century by Thomas Turner, Esq., who formed the park around it; and in 1741 it was sold to Joseph Cranmer, Esq., of the Six Clerks Office. RICKLING is a scattered village to the west, and its Hall, of which Colonel Inglis is the lord, was a place of some importance and grandeur in other days. Morant wrote of it in his time:—

“The situation of it was well chosen. In the neighbourhood are the most delightful fields of the county, called Southern Hills. The walls are of brick, very thick. In the middle there was a square court, the windows of which were long and narrow, set round with free-stone. A gate remains, arched also with free-stone, now turned into a parlour. It hath a stone wall, and one end very much resembles a chapel, or oratory. It seems to have been embattled. Part of the moat is remaining. The artificial mount on the south-west side may have been a keep or dungeon, which was left when the other works were razed, but of this we have no traces in history or tradition. A room here lately went by the name of the King’s Parlour, where, I presume, some prince had been entertained.”

Three quarters of a century have produced some change in the building, but its appearance still conveys the idea of its having been one of the strong castle-homes of the old nobles of the land. Indeed, we have a record that the sister of the great De Mandeville, Earl of Essex, possessed it, and died within it in 1207. The poor of Rickling have two acres of land in Lowfield Common, and the dividends of £31. 10s. 6d., purchased with money left by Joshua Burr, in 1813.

WIDDINGTON, on the opposite side of the road, to the right, is a very ancient village, and the Hall of old appears to have been of some importance, having a chapel attached to it, the walls of which were three feet thick. It now belongs to the Vincent family, and Priors Hall to New College, Oxford.

DEBDEN, the adjacent parish, is a delightful spot when the woodlands which crown its fine hills are green in summer clothing, and its vallies below are covered with waving crops. It seems to have been from the earliest ages a favourite and fertile spot. At the time of the survey, when it was in the possession of Ralph Peverell, it had four acres of vineyard, two of which were in bearing—a proof that the grape was then largely cultivated in the county, and the wine which cheered our forefathers was manufactured in their own homesteads. In these modern times the chief object of interest is the Hall, formerly the seat of Sir Francis Vincent, and to which Miss Vincent will succeed; but the life interest of the Hon. Baronet has been purchased by C. Egerton Spicer, Esq., and the house is occupied by Captain Douglas Lane. It stands on a pleasant rising ground in the midst of a large park, and is surrounded by good gardens and fine plantations. The south-eastern front is in the Grecian style, with noble pillars. In front is a beautiful sheet of water; and from the vistas in the walks, and the higher grounds of the park—

“Where grey old trees of hugest limb  
Now wheel their circling shadows round,  
To make the scorching sun-light dim”—

£100. left by Susan Dorothy Dixon, in 1832, for distribution in bread; a moiety of a cottage, barn, and six acres of land at Debden, given by John Messent, in 1644, for clothing poor old maids and bachelors.

splendid views are obtained far over the country side. The mansion was built from designs of Holland, in 1791, by Richard Chiswell, Esq., whose grandfather, a celebrated London bookseller, had purchased the estate and the manor of Dynes 76 years before. The heiress of Mr. Chiswell married Sir Francis Vincent, and thus the estate came into the possession of the Hon. Baronet, whose title dates from 1620. Amberden Hall, now a farm-house, was a separate ville at the time of the survey, and in later days was an important mansion, with a chapel attached to it, and a large park around. The parish church, which stands within the park of Debden Hall, shaded by a fine grove, is a Gothic structure, and was built in the shape of a cathedral, but the tower long since fell down from decay, and has never been rebuilt. In a chapel at the east end of the south aisle is a rich monument, and many inscriptions to the Chiswell family.—The charities of Debden consist of eight houses given by Mr. Chiswell, in 1774, in lieu of almshouses left by Sir John Stonehouse; £6. a year from Measant's charity; a rent-charge of 20s. left by W. Bendlowe, out of land at Bardfield; £3. charged on the tithes by Dr. Thomas Carter, in 1697; two cottages and three acres of land, by an unknown donor, the proceeds of which are carried to the poor rates; and the rent of a house in Bucklersbury, London, said to have been given by a Mr. Bathurst.

Beyond Debden, at the extremity of the Hundred, to the south-east of Saffron Walden, lie WIMBISH and THUNDERSLEY,—two distinct parishes down to 1482, when, on the decay of Thundersley church, they were united. Though now an inland district, Hollinshed asserts that the little stream which intersects the parish was once navigable, making this to some extent a maritime district.

"There hath been," says he, "a pretie water and in such quantitie that boats have come in times past from Billie Abbee beside Maldon, unto the moores in Radwinter. I have heard also that an anchor was found there near a red willow when the water courses, by Act of Parliament, were surveyed and reformed throughout England, which maketh not a little with the aforesaid relation."

Thundersley church stood on the left-hand side of the road leading from Thaxted to Walden; but even the ruins of the building have disappeared, and corn crops wave over the spot where the hamlet fathers rest. The chief manor is held by Thomas Selby, Esq.; but Tiptoftes, which takes its name from an ancient owner, belongs to Brazenose College, Oxford, to which it was given by Lord Mordaunt, in 1571, for the endowment of three scholarships. Coldcotes was purchased by Dr. Bromfield, in 1652, and given to the poor of St. Andrew's, Holborn, to apprentice seven boys annually. The steeple of the ancient stone church of Wimbish fell down in 1740, and in 1755 was rebuilt of brick. In the chancel are several tombs of the Wiseman family.\* To the northward of Debden is the little parish of WICKEN-BONANT. The manor of Bonant was given, in 1340, by John Flam-bard, to the Hospital at Newport, for the brethren to find a chaplain to celebrate mass for his soul at the Chapel of St. Elene, on his estate. That of the Hall was possessed for generations by the Barlee family; it is now the property of W. C. Smith, Esq.

NEWPORT, which now lies before us, on the Newmarket road, near the spot where the sources of the Cam unite and roll onward towards the ancient seat of learning, was described a century ago as "a pretty town, and an ancient one withal;" and it is still a goodly village, though not the place of importance it appears to have been in olden days.

\* The parish has £4. a year from Bernard's charity for schooling six poor children.



Some years ago it had a prison for offenders in this part of the county, but it was converted into a police-station. In the reign of Edward the Confessor the parish belonged to Earl Harold. It then fell into the hands of the Conqueror, and remained long the property of the crown, but was granted out to various individuals, who exercised all the privileges of the feudal lords of those days, and held markets and fairs, and enjoyed freedom from toll. It had, too, its castle, as it appears by the records that in 1207 Gerard De Furnivall surrendered to King John "the town and castle of Newport," but there is no mention of any fortress or building of the kind here after that date. Not long since there stood at the north end of the parish the remains of an ancient cross, referred to in a grant of lands to the abbot of Walden. Queen Maud granted the parish to Geoffrey De Mandeville, with leave to remove to Walden the market, which before had been of some consequence in the district, with all customs, privileges, and tolls; and furthermore "to turn the way from Newport near the river side, to Walden," upon ground which had been forfeited to her; and this is believed to be the way by Shortgroves. Walden had thus sprung up as a rival; and from this period Newport appears to have diminished and decayed. The Shortgroves here referred to, now the chief mansion of the parish, was anciently a hamlet independent of Newport, being described in the Red Book as *Juxta-Newport*, and in a charter of Henry II. as *Villa de Shortgrove*; but having been given to the priory of St. Bartholomew, in London, that house, it is concluded, would not keep up a separate chapel, and turned over their tenants to the neighbouring parish. The present mansion was built in 1685, by Giles Dent, a citizen and alderman of London; and the two wings were added by the Earl of Thomond, to whom the property had been sold. From the descendants of this noble family it was purchased at the beginning of the present century by the secretary to William Pitt, the ancestor of the present owner, W. C. Smith, Esq., the occupant and lord of the manor. The mansion stands in a fine park to the north of the village, the lawn falling gracefully from the high ground on which it is built towards the old road to Cambridge, and the foot of the hill is washed by the waters of the Cam, which here assume the shape of an ornamental canal. In the rear of the Hall extends another lawn, with plantations and gardens, intersected by canals supplied from the river—rendering Shortgroves one of the most pleasant seats in this part of the county.

A hospital dedicated to St. Leonard was founded here by Richard, son of Serlo of Newport, in the reign of King John, for a master and two chaplains, endowed with lands in this and eight of the surrounding parishes; and there was a fair held for the benefit of the house on the day of its patron saint. Its income at the suppression was valued at £31. 13s. 11d. The site of it appears to have been near the river; and a writer of 1770 says—"A very old building, supposed to have been the original fabric, stands on the right-hand side of the road to Walden, in that part of the town called the hamlet of Birchanger, which is the part that lies beyond the toll-bridge"—this toll-bridge being a place where, according to a record of the last century, wagons paid 2d. each forwards and backwards, higgler's horses a halfpenny each, sheep and all other cattle 4d. a score; but Walden, Audley-End, Great and Little Chesterford, the Wendens, Quendon, and Widdington were exempt from it. The church, which in old records is called the Queen's Free Chapel, is a large edifice, built in the cathedral

style. As we wander through it we find several inscriptions to the Dent family; old brasses invoking prayers for the souls of those who lie beneath; and we gaze with interest upon some of the ancient fittings up of the sacred fabric—six curiously-carved stalls, beneath what was once the rood-loft, a piscina, and three stone seats near the altar, above which are two fine old paintings of Moses and Aaron.

There is a free grammar-school in the town founded by Mrs. Joyce Frankland, in 1586, and endowed with the tithes of Banstead, Surrey, two houses in Little Distaff-lane, London, and a tenement at Hoddesden. A new school house was built about fourteen years ago on the site of the old Guildhall. The income is applied to the master, who has about 60 free scholars; to the visitor, as directed by the foundress; and to repairs. The same lady left £1,540 for the foundation of six fellowships and twelve scholarships at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. The other charities are, Church Mead, 1A., purchased by the churchwardens in 1637, the proceeds being applied to the repairs of the church; a farm of 50A., called Graces, given by John and Agnes Covill in 1520, the rent to be applied to the poor reduced by misfortune; £2. 12s. from Martin's charity for poor widows and widowers. A freehold close and buildings were given in 1799 by the Hon. P. C. Wyndham for a parish workhouse. A rent-charge of 5s., left by John Stretton in 1660, out of a tenement at Sparrows End, also a rent-charge of 6s. given by Richard Coleman, out of a house at Sparrows End, for six poor widows, have been lost; and a house left to the poor by John Lyttall, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was burnt down in 1650.

Advancing to the corner of the county, leaving Saffron Walden to the right, we pass to the village of ARKESDEN, with Wood Hall, the handsome seat of the late R. Birch Wolfe, Esq., and now that of the Rev. William Birch Wolfe, the lord of the manor, son of the Rev. Richard Birch, formerly rector of North Fambridge, who assumed the name of Wolfe on succeeding to the property in 1859. The house stands on a rising ground half a mile south of the church. This parish was once in the possession of the Cutte family; and in the church, which was elegantly rebuilt, principally at the cost of the late R. B. Wolfe, Esq., are various inscriptions to their memory. There was this inscription on the north wall:—

“ Thomas Alderton was a good Benefactor to this Chirch. He gave certain Lands towards the Sustantation of Chantre Preat to sing at the Awter and to help devyn Service at the same on the Holidays. He built this Isle from the North door hitherto—on whos Soul Jesu have Mercy.—Amen.”

The poor of Arkesden have 13s. a year from Martin's charity.

The next parishes are the WENDENS, which are mentioned as one parish in Domesday Book, but were afterwards divided into three. Great and Little Wenden were united by Bishop Sheldon in 1662 at the request of the inhabitants, under the name of Wenden Ambo—the church and the vicarage-house of the latter, which stood on the left-hand side of the road leading from Wenden Lofts, and was in a ruinous state, being pulled down. Lord Braybrooke owns the manor of Great Wendens. Wenden Lofts is a small but delightful parish, principally lying upon hills rising boldly from a little stream, which helps to feed the Cam. It was anciently in a family named Larhel or Le Hout, from which it came to be called Loughts or Lofts. It was sold under an order of Chancery in the early part of the last century to John Wilkes, Esq.; and Lofts Hall, a fine old mansion on the summit of a lofty hill, with extensive prospects, good pleasure grounds,

and a fine canal on the south, is the seat of the Rev. Robert Wilkes, the manorial lord. The church near by, a handsome structure of flint and stone, was rebuilt some years ago by the owner of the estate. The poor of Wenden Ambo have £5. 4s. a year from Martin's charity, and a rent-charge of 3s. 4d. out of Clanver-end farm, left by — Woodcock, in 1716. A rent-charge of 6s. left by — Coleman has been lost. The poor of Wenden Lofts have 13s. from Martin's charity.

**THE ROMAN WAY AND STATION.—THE ANCIENT ICHANUM.—**We now come fairly upon the track of the old Roman; and to the devout antiquary—who can find marks of his footsteps at every turn, and proofs of his presence in the half-perished weapons, coins, and other relics which chance or the patient explorer have from time to time exhumed—the soil appears to be consecrated by the memories, the associations, and the mysteries of what is almost another world over which he is treading. There can be no doubt that all this district, up to Chesterford, and further on into Cambridgeshire, was once teeming with Roman life, activity, and power. Yonder is the fortress on whose ramparts glitter the arms of the sentinels, and around its gates loiter the legions which help to hold the land in subjection. Here is the town with its ringing forges and its busy workshops in which industry is providing for the wants of the rulers. There is the pleasant villa planted in the rural suburb, or further out by the side of the Military Way, in which the officer in authority dwells with his family in luxurious and dignified ease. And in the woodland near, the agriculturist is fashioning the Roman plough for the cultivation of the neighbouring soil, after the patent specification of his own poet—

“Young elms, with early force in copses bow,  
Fit for the figure of the crooked plough.  
Of eight feet long a fastened beam prepare,  
On either side the head produce an ear;  
And sink a socket for the shining share.  
Of beech the plough tail; and the bending yoke  
Of softer linden, hardened in the smoke.”

But all these have passed away like morning shadows flitting over the landscape in the early sun-light; and we look forth upon a scene altogether alien to it, in which quiet peace holds sway, and the people are happily ignorant of chains such as those which the imperial conquerors forged. “Oh!” says the present Lord Braybrooke, standing over a pile of the relics of these passed-away peoples which his persevering researches in this district has brought up from the earth—“Oh! that their spirits could re-visit the scenes in which they were once the principal actors—where they moved, lived, and loved in their little day—if only for a moment, aliens in their own country, strangers at their very hearths, the places once so familiar would know them no more. Their children have forgotten the stock whence they derive their origin; the meaning of deeds and words so prominent in the lives of their forefathers survives but in story, or at least is caught up by occasional glimpses, dimly and darkly, through the mists of tradition and of centuries, as through a veil.” It is only these glimpses of them and their history we can catch as we pass along; and we have already trodden over scenes in which they moved, and homes which they inhabited. At Wenden the foundations of an extensive Roman dwelling-house have been laid bare, amongst which were found coins of the Lower Empire; and the arch at the western end of the church is turned with tiles from an hypocaust. At Arkesden vessels of embossed Samian ware and a terra-cotta female figure, with infants,

emblematical of plenty, have been found. Here, at Littlebury, appears to have stood a fortress, one of the *castris* of the Romans, crowning Ring-hill, and erected for the defence of the extensive settlement. Salmon stated in his time that the fortified ground upon the apex of the hill, encompassed with a deep ditch, seemed to contain between 25 and 30 acres; and he adds that in an orchard of an inn there were foundations and subterraneous caverns very like Roman works. There are yet traces of the fortifications on the hill and a deep ditch around; but on ascending to the spot where war once held sway we find it occupied by a temple erected by Lord Howard many years since, to commemorate a peace, and by an aviary belonging to Audley End, of which lordly domain this forms a part. There are also some remains near the mill, and a mound still exists there surrounded by a ditch; but Mr. Bewsher, the old occupant, informs us that in frequent diggings upon the hill-top he has found nothing but bricks of the common kind. Some fossils were found in excavating the tunnel and cutting for the railway, amongst them shells, one of them a most perfect specimen of the cockle, which suggests some great disruption of nature, or a vast change in the character of the country. In the ninth century Littlebury belonged to a religious house in the Isle of Ely for eight priests with their wives and families—for the celibacy of the Romish clergy does not appear to have been strictly enforced till King Edgar's time; but this institution was afterwards changed into a monastery, attached to Ely Cathedral, which character it maintained till the dissolution. It passed to the family of Lord Braybrooke by purchase from the Marquis of Bristol.\* Following the Roman road, which ran from Littlebury Green, we pass STRETHALL through which it led—formerly reckoned a hamlet to the parish we have just left; and enter the CHESTERFORDS, originally one,—Great Chesterford being unquestionably the centre and the city of the Roman settlement—the ancient *Iceanum*, as it is now generally considered. The proofs of its ancient power are to be sought rather beneath the soil than upon it. Dr. Stukely, who visited the place in 1719, said—

“The foundation of the walls was very apparent, quite round, though level with the ground, including a space of about fifty acres, (others reckon it a mile in compass.) Great part of it serves for a causeway to the public Cambridge road from London; the Crown Inn is built upon it; the rest is made use of by the countrymen for their carriages to and fro in the fields; the earth is still high on both sides of it; in one part they have been long digging it up for materials in building and mending the roads there; I measured its breadth twelve foot, and remarked its composition of rag-stone, flint, and Roman brick, bound together by a strong cement. In a little cottage hard by, the parlour is paved with the bricks; they are fourteen inches and a half long, and nine broad. I remarked that the city was just one thousand Roman feet in breadth, and that the breadth to the length was as three to five, of the same proportion as they made their bricks; 'tis posited obliquely to the cardinal points, its length from north-west to south-

\* There is a good free school in the parish, originally founded by Dame Jane Bradbury, but the grant was lost, and in 1667 the land belonging to it was seized by the lady of the manor and re-granted to the trustees; its endowment consists, since the enclosure in 1807, of 23A. of land, three cottages and two stables, exclusive of the school-house, garden, and two acres of land occupied by the master.—The other charities are a rent-charge of 20s. out of Perring's Farm, left by Thos. Clarke in 1586; the interest of £60, left by Thos. Sutton in 1585; a rent-charge of £8 out of the manor of Audley-End, granted in 1783, in satisfaction of the will of Thos. Raymond; the dividends of £405. 18s. stock, left by Wm. Steevens Walton, in 1833, for aged and industrious poor; the rent of the Poor's Allotment of 2A. 2R. 32P.; 19s. 6d. a year from Martin's charity; £8 from Dr. Harvey's; and five poor men and five poor women are clothed annually from Lord Howard de Walden's charity.

west, whereby wholesomeness is so well provided for, according to the direction of Vitruvius; the river *Cam* runs under the wall, whence its name. In the north-west end of it I found the foundation of a Roman temple very apparent; the poverty of the corn growing where the walls stood defines it to such a nicety that I was able to measure it with exactness enough; the dimensions of the cell were fifteen feet in breadth, and forty in length. Many Roman coins have been found in the city, or borough field, as they call it; which coins are chiefly of Caligula, Trajan, Constantine, and Constantius."

Salmon gives the following description of a curious relic found here, and his statement shows how few Roman remains had at that time been disintombed in a county now known to be peculiarly rich in them :—

"There was, not above 10 years since, at the mill, a Roman urn of stone for three women whose busts are in bas relief; it was then used as a lye trough, though the only Roman relic in Essex, except some smaller of earth, to contain the ashes of the dead at Colchester, Coxhall, and other parts of the county, some entire, but most broken. The shape of it is as half an hexangular vessel, but with a back to it to stand against a wall. It has been thought part of an altar for the *Dææ Matres*, of which many are found in Northumberland, about the wall erected by the German auxiliaries, but not of this form, or indeed hollow at all, as this is designed for ashes. The length, as I remember, of the back part is near three foot, and the depth of it about half as much."

Subsequent researches have brought to light, besides further coins, a bronze bust, various fibulæ, brass and gold utensils, urns, and entire skeletons. One urn contained several written scrolls of parchment, which unfortunately disappeared or were destroyed before a proper examination could be made of them. Lord Braybrooke, who went through all this district as a pilgrim of the pick, compelling the earth to give up the evidence of its former inhabitants which it had so long concealed, brought up amongst other things a bronze tooth comb and pateræ, a bracelet, a sacrificial patera, coins, and fragments of pottery; and from the proofs thus piled up there can be no doubt as to the olden character of the spot. Descending to a later period, we find that at the survey this parish was in the Conqueror's hands, and was afterwards long held by the Marshals of England as part of the demesne lands of the crown. It possessed peculiar privileges, which after an official inquiry into them were thus set forth in a charter of Charles I. :—

"Whereas according to the custom of our kingdom of England hitherto obtained and approved, men and tenants of the ancient demesne of the crown of England have been and ought to be exempted from the payment of toll throughout our whole kingdom of England, and according to the aforementioned custom, men and tenants of the ancient demesne of the crown aforesaid have usually been hitherto time out of mind exempted from contributing to our parliament, or that of our ancestors the kings of England, a proportional share of the expenses of soldiers, and according to the same custom, men and tenants of certain manors ought not to be made to serve in courts, except only in those of manors of this sort.

"And ye shall not put men and tenants of the same manors in assizes, upon juries, or in any recognizances out of the court of their manor, unless they hold lands and tene-ments of another tenure, by which, according to the tenor of the statute of common council of our kingdom of England in that case provided, they ought to be put in assizes, upon juries, or in recognizances, and if upon these or the like occasions ye shall make distress on any of the aforementioned men and tenants of the manor of Chesterford aforesaid, ye shall forthwith discharge the same. In witness whereof," &c.

In 1502 the manor was given to the Abbey of Westminster; and since the dissolution it has passed through the Earl of Suffolk to its present owner, the Marquis of Bristol. The tenure is borough-English—that is, in cases of intestacy the estates pass to the youngest son or daughter.

The church of Great Chesterford is a large and handsome stone fabric, standing upon a rising ground; and amongst the few inscrip-



tions of any antiquity which it contains is the following in a little chapel on the south of the chancel:—

“Pray for the souls of William Holden and Katheryn his wife, founders of our Ladies Chauntre, which William deceased 2 Dec., 1523.”

License to found this chantry was granted by Henry VIII., and it was endowed with lands and rents, but it continued only a short time, and the property was granted away by Edward VI.

Of Little Chesterford the Marquis of Bristol is also the lord, but much of the soil belongs to Lord Braybrooke. The church is a small but apparently very ancient edifice, with a Gothic arch, ornamented with sculptured heads at the north porch. It contains several ancient tombs; one of them of pretentious character to a member of the Walsingham family; and another raised upon a building of flints, and containing a brass with a Latin inscription as follows:—

“Here lie George Langham, Esq., formerly lord of this village, who died the 13th of Sept., 1462, and Isabel his wife.”

There is a free school for Great and Little Chesterford, founded and endowed by John Hart in 1592, under the control of the trustees and the Master and Fellows of Magdalen College, Cambridge. The property consists of 11A. 2R. 22P. of land, a cottage, garden, and yard; £105 stock left by Peter Nash in 1810; and a house and garden for the master. The free scholars are taught in the National schools. The other charities of Great Chesterford are a house and 53A. of land left for the poor by the Rev. Thomas Hill in 1459, and exchanged at the enclosure in 1804 for 44A. 2R. 17P. in Dedman Bottom Field, and held with 2A. 2R. 20P. of old enclosure, and the farm buildings; the Town Close of 1A. 3R. 21P., and five tenements; £1. 6s. from Martin's Charity; the dividends of £122 stock left by Viscountess Falkland; and the rent of 2A. 0R. 19P. allotted at the enclosure in lieu of an old rent-charge. The sum of £1. 10s. 4½d. from Housden's charity, and the rent of 4A. 1R. 36P. of land in Dedman Bottom Field, are applied in aid of church-rates. The charities of Little Chesterford consist of 6s. 6d. from Martin's Charity; the dividends of £122 stock left by Viscountess Falkland; a cottage and 12 acres of copyhold land, purchased with money left by Lady Hunsden in 1617, and other donors, and exchanged at the enclosure for 5A. 0R. 14P. of freehold; and the dividends of £507. 18s. 11d. stock for the poor not receiving parochial relief, purchased with money left by Lady Elizabeth Osborn in 1733.

If Chesterford were the ancient Iceanum, it was a spot occupied by the Britons before the Romans set foot in the land; and their pasture grounds and Druid groves, and the tombs of the dead, would extend into the neighbouring district. Accordingly we find, by Lord Braybrooke's “*Sepulchra Exposita*,” that the noble antiquarian found traces of them in several of the border parishes to the west. At Wenden, and also at Elmdon, a parish 3½ miles distant, (of which the Rev. Robert Wilkes is the chief lord,) celts and spear-heads were discovered.\* At CHRISHALL bronze celts were taken from a hole, some of the metal being fused, from which this is supposed to have been the site of a forge; and near the Grange the spade brought to light an ancient British tomb. The manors of this parish belong to Lord Dacre and the Rev. Robert Wilkes. Martin's charity in this parish consists of land

\* The charities of Elmdon consist of 2A. 0R. 20P. of land, taken at the enclosure in lieu of a rent-charge of £14 out of the rectory, left by Thomas Crawley in 1559 for a priest to teach grammar and good manners to the children of this and the neighbouring parishes; and £8. 18s. from Martin's charity.



left by Lettice Martin in 1562, for the benefit of the poor of 33 parishes; it consists of 79*A.* 1*R.* 19*P.*, taken in exchange for the old estate at the enclosure; the share of this parish is £5. 4*s.* The other charity is a rent-charge of 20*s.*, left by Thomas Elkin in 1615, and paid out of land belonging to Mr. Wilkes.

The CHISHALLS, Great and Little, are the extreme parishes bordering on Hertfordshire, in a hilly and wooded district. Lord Dacre owns the principal part of Great Chishall, but the Rev. Robert Wilkes is lord of Farrance Fee. Sir Peter Buckstone Soame is lord and owner of most of the soil of Little Chishall. This is believed to have been the boundary between Mercia and the kingdom of the East Saxons; and Salmon says:—

“By Shaftnoe bridge appears a bank, which probably ran through Hertfordshire to Middlesex as a mound. The memory of this is kept up at Cheshunt, though no bank is to be seen, and for many miles the land above the bank in the same fields is inherited by the eldest brother; that below the bank descends by Borough-English to the youngest. This custom is frequent on the east-side of the bank in Hertfordshire, not on the Mer-cian side.”

The poor of Great Chishall have 13*s.* out of Martin's charity; 5*s.* out of a house at Chrishall, left by Thomas Witcham, in 1624; the rent of three roods of land left by George Langley, in 1627; and 2*A.* 1*R.* 27*P.* of land allotted at the enclosure in lieu of land left by Richard Dale, in 1620, and George Bownest, in 1650.

HEYDON is the last parish in the Hundred, and is the highest and north-west corner of the county, adjoining both to Herts. and Cambridgeshire. In this parish a curious chamber, cut in the chalk, was discovered by Lord Braybrooke, in 1848, containing a sort of altar, with Roman fictilia, some brass coins of the Lower Empire, and a bronze bracelet. An old track-way, still known as the Roman road, runs down the side of the range of hills, close to this chamber, towards Royston. One of the curious old tenures of ancient times has survived in this parish.

“This manor for many years,” says the record, “hath had the honour of being holden by Grand Sergeancy; that is, by the lords of it serving, or waiting, at the coronation of the kings of England, with a bason and towel, to wash the king's hands before dinner, and to have for their fee, the bason, ewer, and towel. Anciently this manor was in two moieties, and in two lords, one of whom held a bason, the other a towel, for the king to wash his hands.” It further proceeds:—“Sir Peter Soame, at the coronation of King James II., put in his claim to hold the bason and ewer for one moiety of the manor of Heydon, and for the other moiety to hold the towel when the king washed his hands before dinner, which his predecessors, tenants of the said manor, had done from time immemorial; and petitioned to be admitted to perform those services, either in person, or by a convenient deputy; receiving all the fees, profits, and emoluments to the said service belonging.”

The claim was also allowed at the coronations of George II., III., and IV. Lord Braybrooke is the present lord of the manor. The mistress of the National School has the dividends of £156. 5*s.* stock, given by a former rector, whose name is not stated; and the poor have 13*s.* from Martin's charity; and 9*A.* 7*P.* of land in Heydon, with 4*A.* 1*R.* 27*P.*, in Great Chishall, partly purchased with a legacy left by the Rev. Dr. Young, in 1663.

## Freshwell Hundred.

This Hundred, or as it is sometimes called, Half-Hundred, includes the following ten parishes :—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.					
					Rectorial.			Vicarial.		
Bardfield, Great	<i>Bar</i> , a boar; boar field; or <i>barns</i> , the brook .. .. .	2689	1110	5754	445	0	0	202	11	0
Bardfield, Little		1710	326	2201	480	0	0			
Bardfield, Saling		1111	360	1467	270	0	0	*160	0	0
Ashdon .....	Ash hill.....	4969	1013	4009	800	0	0			
Hellons Bumpsted .....	Hellons is from the name of an ancient owner .....	8191	951	3605	711	9	9	274	18	0
Hadstock and Bartlow Hamlet	The Saxon words <i>had</i> or <i>head</i> , and <i>stoccs</i> .....	1870	801	3323	1270	0	0			
Hempsted .....	<i>Hæm</i> , or <i>ham</i> , a dwelling; and <i>stede</i> , a place; chief dwelling place .....	3565	827	3910	725	18	5	†235	10	9
Radwinter .. .	<i>Rad</i> , road; and <i>wintren</i> , vines; the road by the vineyards...	3802	916	4622	700	0	0			
Great Sampford	A sandy ford over the river ...	2224	906	3310	517	0	0	129	1	9
Little Sampford		1990	471	3586	700	0	0			

\* A donative curacy. † This is a curacy annexed to the vicarage of Great Sampford. ‡ The gross income.

This is a small district, about ten miles long from north to south, and six in breadth at the widest part, lying between the Hundreds of Hinckford, Dunmow, and Uttlesford, and touching at its extreme point on Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. It is of a purely rural character, with its fertile farms and pleasant hills and vales interspersed with fine woodlands. It takes its name from a spring rising in a valley near Radwinter, called Freshwell, which after joining several other rivulets falls into the Blackwater.

The BARDFIELDS are a cluster of parishes in the southern end of the Hundred. Passing the village of BARDFIELD SALING, or Little Saling as it is sometimes called, formerly a chapelry of Great Bardfield, but divided from it and made a distinct parish in 1574, and of which the Rev. B. E. Lampet is the lord,\* we reach GREAT BARDFIELD,—or “the burgh of Bardfield,” as it is called in an old record. This may, from its population and position, be considered the metropolis of the district. Its situation is delightful, the village standing on a declivity extending from the south-east to the north-west; the foot of the hill is washed by a stream which runs into the Pant; and from several points in the street and the adjacent neighbourhood the eye may wander far over rustic scenery,—the fields and homesteads, villages and churches of the surrounding country. Formerly this was the seat of a peculiar manufacture; here were made the spinning wheels and spindles which were heard whirring and humming on nearly all the cottage floors of this and the neighbouring counties. The modern loom and the steam engine at last fairly drove the good dames out of the market, and the wheels and spindles which were turned by hundreds out of the workshops of Bardfield will soon be seized upon as relics of the past, to be set up as objects of wonder in museums. This was, too, a market town, though we have no record as to when or by whom the privilege was granted; and the old cross, with a room above it, in which courts were held, stood in the centre of the town;

\* The poor of the parish have two cottages and half an acre of land, called Partridge Tenements, given by an unknown donor.

but the market, which was held in it on Tuesdays, having been long disused, the building was pulled down about 1769. The spirit of modern Bardfield, though it cannot raise its market from the dead, has repaired the loss of the building by erecting a handsome little public hall, which was completed in December, 1859, at a cost of £750, for lectures and other meetings; and by its occasional social and intellectual gatherings, its Literary Society, and its police station, the town well asserts its right to be considered the head of the Hundred. The lordships here, as indeed in most of this district, were for some time after the Conquest in the family of Fitz-Giselbert, afterwards Earls of Clare; but having come to the Crown, Henry VIII. granted the burgh of Bardfield to Anne of Cleves for her life. Edward VI. gave the chief manor, with "the borough of Bardfield," to Sir Thomas Wroth, at which time the estate had its great and little park. In 1621 it was purchased by Sir Martin Lumley, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1623; and he built an elegant mansion called the Great Lodge. The family possessed it till 1728, when an act of parliament passed to sell the estate to pay legacies and debts, and the Hall Farm, Claypit Lodge, Little Lodge, and Burkett, were purchased by Guy's Hospital. The Lodge, which has been since pulled down, the parks and manor, passed to Edward Stephenson, Esq. Park Hall, which is a farm formed out of the enclosed lands of the parks, now belongs to William Sandle, Esq.; and the Rev. B. E. Lampet is lord of the manor. Pitsey, which once belonged to Stoke Priory, was in 1636 held by John Owen, gent., who forfeited it by killing a bailiff; and it was given by Mr. Haselfoot, to whom it had been granted by Charles I., to the Haberdashers' Company, in London, who still hold it, partly for charitable purposes. In an old house in this parish called the Place, once no doubt a mansion of some importance, Queen Elizabeth is said to have sought shelter while Mary was upon the throne; and tradition points with becoming pride to two rooms especially which were the safe retreat of the royal fugitive. Bardfield Church is a good stone fabric; and in it we find the tomb of Sergeant Bendlowe, to whose beneficence various parishes in this part of the county are so largely indebted. The long and highly laudatory Latin inscription records of him that the common people called for a faithful pleader; on a sudden the royal cause made the same demand; and hence it was that he had the singular and great honour of being the only sergeant-at-law. He died in 1584.

For schooling twelve poor children, William Boys left £14 a year out of Waltham Cross Farm, in 1766; the schoolmistress has £4 a year for teaching four poor children out of Bernard's charity; and eight others are educated and partly clothed with a rent-charge of £11. 10s., left by Thomas Pepys, out of Wildings Farm, Steeple Bumpsted, in 1720. The poor have the rent of 13*l.* of land called Bardfield Lays, left by Jeffry Pool; a rent-charge of 20*s.* left by Sir O. Affleck, out of land at Shalford; the church-houses, four tenements, were given by Sir Martin Lumley, in 1707; the rents are applied to the repair of the church. Sergeant Bendlowe left the Guildhall, for almshouses and a free-school, and charged £10 on Place Farm for the purpose, but this charity fell into abeyance, and the Guildhall tumbled down. Suits have been commenced for the restoration of the charity, but have not been proceeded with; and no one receives anything from it. Other small charities have also been lost.

Of LITTLE BARDFIELD John Cutts, Esq., is the lord, and resides at the Hall, a good mansion planted in the midst of very pleasant grounds, which its present occupant has much improved. Mode Hall, an ancient

seat of the Bernards and other families, was a large mansion, encompassed by its moat, but it was long since destroyed. There are five almshouses for poor women, and a school, founded by Mrs. Sarah Bernard, who, in 1774 left 120 acres of land, and all the timber to be cut down in Halsted Grove, for the purpose. Out of this £4 was to be paid to the parish. The poor have a rent-charge of 30s. out of a farm in the parish, left by Jeffrey Wade, in 1730 ; and 20s. out of the rectory, by an unknown donor.

The SAMPFORDS, GREAT and LITTLE, or Old and New, as they have been called, are the next parishes in our path as we journey northward—both with pleasant villages, standing above the vale of the Pant, three or four miles from Thaxted. We find here two fine old mansions, one of them, Tinden End, in Great Sampford, an ancient seat near the spot where once stood the moated home of the Giffards, which the late Sir James M'Adam fitted up and embellished with tasteful grounds ; and Little Sampford Hall, the seat of Myles Lonsdale Formby, Esq., who is lord of the manors of the two parishes. The mansion, which has about it the stamp of one of those old manorial halls of which the county feels justly proud, stands upon an eminence in a park near the church ; and below it winds a pleasant canal formed by the waters of the Pant. This was part of the estates of Fitz-Gizelbert. It afterwards passed through various other families, and was long in that of Green, who dwelt at the Hall, and had large property in the county ; but Sir Edward Green losing it at the gaming table in 1640, it came to Sir William Halton, who, soon after obtaining it, was created a baronet. It passed through the families of Peck and Stanton, to the late Sir William Eustace, whose second wife was a daughter of Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey ; and Captain Formby having married his daughter and heiress, became possessed of the Sampford estate in her rights. The estate called Friars was so named because it belonged to the Knights' Hospitallers, having been given to them by the daughter of Geoffery Fitz Baldwin, in the reign of Henry III. In the church of Little Sampford are several monuments of the Peck family ; and on an ancient tomb on the north side, of the date of 1550, are the following lines :—

“ Lo! in this tumber combynd are thes too bereft of lyfe,  
 Sur Edward Greene, a famous knyghte, and Margerye, his wyfe.”

The charities consist of the dividends of £204 stock, purchased with money left for the poor of the two parishes by Catherine Riley, in 1828.—In Little Sampford there are  $2\frac{1}{4}$  acres of church land ; and the poor have the rent-charge of 9 acres of land at Spains-end, given by the Peck family in the last century.

HEMPSTED.—THE TOMB OF HARVEY.—After passing RADWINTER, formerly called Great and Little Radwinter—the Bullock family owning the manor of the Hall ; Mr. Wolfe that of Great Brockhales ; and Lord Maynard, Bendish Hall, which is said to have been originally a distinct parish\*—we reach the scattered village of HEMPSTED. It is not, perhaps, so picturesquely situated as several other parishes in the Hundred, but it is holy ground—consecrated by being the occasional home while living, and the resting place when dead, of Dr. William Harvey, who was to that little world, man, what Newton was to the solar system. Hempsted Hall, which was anciently held of the honor of Olare, was purchased about 1640, either by Dr. William Harvey himself, or his brother, Eliab Harvey, Esq., of the family long seated

\* The proceeds of the Town Meadow, 2 acres, and the Town land, less than an acre, and a house, garden, and blacksmith's shop, are applied to the repair of the church.

at Chigwell, and from which the late Admiral Harvey, the father of Mrs. T. W. Bramston, was descended. The hall was an old mansion, moated after the fashion of other days; and the doctor, whose reputation as a philosopher and an oracle in medical science had then been established, made it at times his residence, as did other members of the Harvey family; but the house is gone, the gardens have passed away, and we can only trace its site by the remaining moat and one of the outhouses, which is now converted into a cottage. The man whose memory is associated with this spot, and whose grand and important discovery of the circulation of the blood has preserved his name to all succeeding generations in the front rank of the benefactors of mankind, was the eldest son of Thomas Harvey, of Folkestone, in Kent, and was born April 2, 1578. At ten years of age he was sent to the grammar school at Canterbury, and at fourteen he removed to Cambridge, with a view to the study of physic. At the end of five years he visited France and Germany and Padua, the great medical school of that time. Having been made a doctor in 1602, he returned to England, took that degree at Cambridge, and commenced practice in London in the following year. He was physician to James I. and Charles I., and a steady adherent of the royal cause. The following account of the doctor's rescue from death, as if by the special hand of Providence, is given by Aubry in his "Miscellanies," published in 1721:—

"When Dr. Harvey, travelling with several others to Padua, went to Dover, he showed his pass, as the rest did, to the governor there, who told him he must not go, and kept him prisoner. The doctor desired to know the reason; none would he assign, but it was his will to have it so. The packet boat hoisted sail that evening very fair, and the doctor's companions in it. A terrible storm ensued, and all were drowned; the next day the sad news came to Dover. The doctor was unknown by name; but the night before the governor had a perfect vision in a dream, of Dr. Harvey, who came to pass over to Calais, and that he had a warning to stop him. This the governor told the doctor next day."

The warning probably came from the government, in the belief that the doctor, as a suspected cavalier, was on an embassy to the fugitive king. His great discovery of the circulation of the blood was first broached in 1615, in the Lumlian Lectures to the College of Physicians, and matured and published in 1628. It startled the world. The old physicians refused to acknowledge it, and Harvey confessed that he found his practice fall off after its promulgation; but he lived to see its truth established and its importance admitted. He declined the presidency of the College of Physicians, but he built for that body a hall, a library, and a museum, and endowed the society with his paternal estate, he never having married. He died June 3, 1657, in his 80th year, and was buried in the retired little church here, on the north side of which is a chapel, with the vault and monuments of the family. The most ancient of these is a tomb of black and white marble, with a bust placed in a niche, over which is an arched pediment, and by the sides are Cupids in postures of distress, one of them holding in his hand a death's head. This is the tomb of Harvey; but as the visitor approaches with reverence

"The spot where buried genius lies,"

he is shocked by finding all about it in a state of sad decay. Not long since the sexton was stated to be in the habit of converting the vault into a show room, and rattling the bones of the great philosopher in his coffin for the entertainment of his audience. The publication of

the fact put an end to this indignity to the illustrious dead; and there is some hope of the monument being restored, or the coffin transferred to some more worthy resting place. Upon the tomb is an inscription in Latin, of which the following is a translation:—

“William Harvey, to which name all the universities pay the greatest veneration; who after so many thousand years first discovered the constant circulation of the blood, obtaining thereby health to the world, and immortality to himself; who alone rescued the birth and generation of animals from false philosophy; to whom mankind are indebted for the knowledge of medicine itself. Chief physician to King James and King Charles; diligent and successful professor of anatomy and surgery in the College of Physicians in London, for whom he erected and endowed, with his own estate, a magnificent library. At length, after labouring with success in his studies, in his practice, and in his discoveries, and after many statues had been erected both at home and abroad to perpetuate the memory of his extensive knowledge of the human body, died without issue on the 8th of June, in the year of our Lord 1657, of his age 80, full of years and honour. We shall rise again.”

Another monument of white veined marble contains a number of inscriptions to other members of the same family.

In contrast with the wise and virtuous, there is another memory connected with Hempsted—that of Dick Turpin, the notorious robber and criminal—(whose career is noticed page 166). He was born here, in the house, it is stated, which is now the Rose and Crown Inn. The manors, and most of the soil of the parish, are now vested in C. Fane, Esq. The only charities in the parish are three tenements, the rents of which have been carried to the poor-rates, and the almshouse and workhouse, believed to have been given by John Pound, and occupied by paupers.

HELIONS BUMPSTED is a large and pleasant village, the parish bordering partly on Cambridge and partly on Suffolk. The manor of Bumpsted Hall, which had formerly a mansion of some importance with a park, now belongs to J. Shaw, Esq.; Olmsted Hall, once a distinct hamlet, and described in some records as “the village of Olmsted,” to Queen's College, Cambridge; Helions, to St. Thomas's Hospital, having been granted by Edward VI. to the citizens of London, in 1553. There are 2A. 35P. of church-land; and four cottages and a blacksmith's shop belonging to the poor.

ASHDON—BARTLOW HILLS.—This parish, of which Viscount Maynard is the lord, adjoins Radwinter on the north, and is about four miles from Saffron Walden. It is a pleasant rural village; and the hamlet of Bartlow, on the north, contains those remarkable hills or barrows whose origin has for ages puzzled the historian and the antiquarian inquirer. They consist of four great hills, with three smaller ones in front, raised on a gentle acclivity, round which the country rises like an extended amphitheatre. By nearly all the writers of the last century it was taken for granted that this Ashdon was the Assendune where the great battle which decided England's fate was fought between Canute and Ironsides, and that these barrows were the graves of the Danish victors. Modern researches and comparison have placed the scene of the conflict, as we have described it, in Rochford Hundred; and the pick-axe and the spade have shown that these barrows have nothing Danish about them. Nearly a hundred years ago some of them were opened, when in a stone coffin were found two bodies, one of which lay with the head to the other's feet. In two other similar coffins were pieces of bones, and chains of iron about the size of horses' bits. In 1832 the smaller barrows were opened, when, amongst other things brought to the light of day, was a large cylindrical glass urn, open at the mouth, and two-thirds full of



a pale, clear, yellow liquor, covering a deposit of burnt human bones, on the top of which lay a signet ring and a brass coin of the Emperor Adrian. Another of the barrows, 70 feet high, with trees growing on the top, was pierced in the side a few years later, and after running a tunnel 50 feet to the centre, a wooden box four feet square was found, much decayed, but containing various sepulchral relics. One was a green coloured glass vase, 18 inches high, with an elegant fluted handle, filled with calcined human bones in the state in which they were collected from the funeral pile. Other vessels contained the residue of wine,—some the bones of birds; and leaves of box were found scattered in the tomb; all connected with Roman funeral rites. The hills are decidedly Roman; though conjecture in vain endeavours to look back through the dim past, and divine the cause for the imperial soldiers raising earthy monuments of this kind over those who have slept for 1,500 years at least in this picturesque spot. An ancient building, called the Guildhall, five cottages, and about two and a half acres of land, have long been held in trust, and the rents are partly applied to educational purposes, and partly distributed to the poor, who have also a rent-charge of 10s. out of Newnham Hall, left by the Rev. E. Sherbrooke, in 1589; the proceeds of half an acre of land left by Thomas Saward, in 1696; a rent-charge of 10s. out of Herd's Meadow, left by John Freeman, in 1639. The dividends of £100. stock, left by Robert Freeman, in 1817, are chiefly applied to the school.

HADSTOCK is the farthest northern parish in the Hundred, separated from Cambridge by the little river Linton, and from its highest parts it commands beautiful views over that county. From the earliest records the parish belonged to the monks of Ely; afterwards it fell into the hands of the bishop, who obtained the grant of a market here in 1337, but this has long been discontinued. At the dissolution it fell to the Crown, and in 1600 was granted to Thomas Sutton, the founder of the Charterhouse. In 1691 it was purchased of the Earl of Suffolk by the Matthews family, and S. Matthews, Esq., is the present lord of the manor. The north door of the church is ornamented with ancient iron work, beneath which was a skin of enormous thickness, which appeared to have been tanned; and this tradition represents as the skin of a Dane, who was flayed alive for sacrilege in this church. Lord Braybrooke says,—“Amongst the lower orders in this parish the general impression seems to be strongly in favour of a Danish ancestry, and a little purple flower prevalent in the neighbourhood is called Danes-blood. It is, nevertheless, the centre of Roman land. The overseers pulled up part of a tessellated pavement to mend the roads, and thus, whatever claims they may have to Danish descent, by this act they certainly established a title to Gothic ancestry.” The foundations of extensive Roman villas were laid bare in 1852, in a spot known as Sunken Church Field. The church is large and ancient, and a massive Norman arch forms the northern entrance. On a curious screen of antique carved-work a fox is seen lecturing to a flock of geese—to say the least of it, a singular design for a sacred edifice. Near the church-yard is a well, formerly called St. Botolph's, filled from another within the yard, and no doubt its waters were considered of healing and miracle-working power in olden time. The charities for the poor are 13s. 4d. out of Newnham Hall, left by the Rev. E. Sherbrooke; 5s. out of the land enclosed from the waste, given by Robert Spencer; 5s. given by John Bowtell, out of a farm at Linton; and the interest of £20. given by an unknown donor.

## Lexden Hundred.

This Hundred contains the following thirty parishes:—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Coggeshall .....	Cocks hall.....	2770	2580	7252	1012 18 6	254 2 0
Aldham .....	The old village.....	1825	370	2149	410 0 0	
Chappel .....	The hamlet chapel .....	1148	452	1650		170 0 0
Earls Colne.....	Their situation on the river Colne, and the anolent lords {	2009	1518	5534	242 14 9	670 15 0
Colne Engaine. }		2444	670	4223	750 0 0	
Wakes Colne ... }		1926	459	2998	612 10 8	
White Colne ... }		1467	459	2157	480 0 0	
Copford .....	Coppe, head; and the ford over the river .....	2397	767	4690	656 18 0	
Feering .....	Fearr, and tag, bull's pasture ...	2230	825	5366	526 0 0	253 0 0
Inworth .....		1554	717	2188	378 0 0	
Markshall ... ..	The family of De Merk.....	804	40	922	176 0 0	
Messing .....	Mert, large; and ing, a meadow; the large meadow.....	2549	791	3287	480 0 0	418 0 0
Pattiswick .....	Paat, a path; and wio, a village or farm.....	1297	354	1800	240 10 0	
Great Tey .....	The title of a royal officer, these being Thane lands .....	2503	735	4108	*352 0 0	226 11 0
Little Tey .....		486	74	716	†140 0 0	
Marks Tey .....		1214	437	3167		246 10 0
West Bergholt. }	Berg, a hill; andholt, a wood; hill wood .....	2273	852	3297	600 0 0	
Birch .....	Briat, a bridge; Heckford bridge	3069	962	4255	720 0 0	
Boxted.....	Box or beech trees, and stede, a place .....	3082	909	5147	532 0 0	224 0 0
Dedham .....		2551	1792	6725	500 0 0	181 0 0
East Donyland ...	Dunland—hilly or high-land ...	1067	828	1983	220 0 0	
Easthorpe .....	The eastern village.....	1300	161	1682	300 0 0	
Fordham .....	The ford at the ham, or street ...	2517	740	3679	560 0 0	
Gt. Horkeasley... }	Horse-ley-horse pasture .....	3084	749	5861	1005 17 6	
Lit. Horkeasley. }		1029	216	1860		169 0 0
Langham .....	Long farro or village .....	2896	863	4391	640 0 0	
Mount Bures .....	Beorh, a fortification.....	1404	279	2375	442 0 0	
Stanway .....	Stone way.....	3363	951	5724	795 0 0	
Wivenhoe .....	Wiven is doubtful; how, rising ground .....	1597	1672	4718	418 0 0	
Wormingford.....	Name of an owner and the ford...	2331	535	4275	478 0 0	263 0 0

\* A sinecure rectory.—† The gross income.—‡ A Perpetual Curacy: this is the value.

The Hundred comprises the large tract which extends from Kelvedon and Coggeshall up to Colchester, and partly around it; but not including Lexden, from which it may be presumed it originally received its name. It sweeps on the right between Winstree and Thurstable and the boundary of the borough up to Wivenhoe; and it takes in all the rural parishes on the left nearly up to Halsted. On the north it skirts the Stour, which divides it from Suffolk, up to Tending Hundred. It is intersected by the Colne, and touched along part of its western border by the Blackwater; and though its soil varies, it has a large portion of rich corn lands.

GREAT COGGESHALL is the first town, indeed the only town, in the district, and from its importance and population is the capital—LITTLE COGGESHALL, its hamlet, which is divided from it by the Blackwater, running through the valley, being in Witham Hundred. The situation, with many of the houses rising up a hill side, on the banks of the Blackwater, and the church on a declivity, is pleasant—so pleasant that in some old deeds it is called Sunnendon, or Sunny Hill. When the fugitive Flemings introduced the woollen manufacture into the county, this locality was one of the first places in which it took root; and Coggeshall became celebrated for baize of peculiar fineness called "Coggeshall Whites." The manufacture was carried on largely; and the fortunes made by it in this town were counted by the hundred

thousand. At the close of the last century, however, it began to decay; the trade gradually took flight northward; and the parish was left with a large distressed and unemployed population. The town, however, still maintains its manufacturing character. Silk came in to succeed departed wool; and there are now several firms, and a large number of hands, engaged in producing those more beautiful fabrics. There is, too, a large factory for refining and manufacturing patent isinglass and gelatine, introduced by Mr. Swinborne; many of the population are employed in the tambour lace trade; and the lands of the parish have long been famed for the extensive growth of garden seeds. The town is, therefore, a place of considerable activity and trade. An ancient chapel, which in the sixteenth century was converted into a market house, was pulled down in 1787. Its site was thrown into the market hill; and its olden market, long disused, is now forgotten. Coggeshall Abbey, which occupied, with farm and subsidiary buildings, the hill above the river as we approach the town from the south-west, is found connected with many of the records and title deeds of this part of the county, in consequence of the grasp which the monks succeeded in obtaining of many a fair tract of land, and manor, and church-living hereabout. They were the lords of this town—in fact the creators of it; for the Abbey was the first building of importance reared at this spot, and the houses and streets of what is now known as Coggeshall were the fringe which was gradually woven around the monastic institution. There appears to have been a small Roman station or villa in the locality—probably the country seat of some great officer from Camulodunum. There may be adduced as evidence of this, a phial with a lamp in it, covered with a Roman tile, found in an arched vault near the town; urns with ashes and bones—one of them, which had been enclosed in two other pots, being covered with a velvet-like substance, and having the small bones wrapped in fine silk; a few coins; and two sacrificial dishes, one having at the bottom, in Roman letters, the inscription “Coccili M.” It has even been asserted—but without a shadow of proof to support it—that Coggeshall was the ancient Canonium. At the time of the survey, however, after the lordship had been taken from the Saxon owner, Colo, and secured by the Earl of Bologne, there was no town or ville here. The record in Domesday Book justifies us in this conclusion. It was not till more than a century after that the foundations of Coggeshall began to be laid. The lordships of the parish—for the distinctions of Great and Little Coggeshall were then unknown—passed to Maud, the heiress of the Earl of Bologne, afterwards the wife of King Stephen; and in 1142, the royal pair having founded the Abbey for Cistercian or white monks, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, settled the whole of these estates upon it. The foundation was in the name of the Queen alone, who also gave the monks exemption from toll through all her lands. King John, in 1203, allowed them to enclose a wood and form a park; and from Henry III. they had leave to enclose their woods at the Tolleshunts, Inworth, Childerditch, and Warley. The same king, in 1247, gave the abbot the right of free warren in Coggeshall; and three years after granted him a fair for eight days yearly, to commence on the 31st of July. In 1256 the abbey had the royal authority to hold a market on Saturdays at the manor of Coggeshall, but only on condition that it was “no prejudice to neighbouring markets.” Ralph of Coggeshall, an abbot, who died in 1230, was one of the

literary lights of his day. He wrote several chronicles, and was celebrated for his learning and talents,—not less remarkable was he, it is added, for his parsimony. The brotherhood drew largely from the devotional feeling of that day, and grew in wealth. They possessed nearly the whole of the Coggeshalls, with the rectories and tithes; manors in Tolleshunt Major and Inworth; Cuton Hall, in Springfield; the manor of Chingford Earls; Tillingham Hall, Childerditch; and the rectory of High Easter. There were also two chantries attached to their church, one founded in 1407, and endowed with £10 out of Springfield Barnes and other property, for a monk to pray daily for the souls of Sir Hugh De Badewe, his wife, and Thomas Coggeshall; the other was instituted by the brethren themselves, for a monk to pray daily for Edward III., his queen, and their children; and the monarch was so touched with this proof of cowed loyalty that he granted them a hogshead of good red wine, to be delivered to them yearly from the royal cellars, to cheer their hearts at the feast of Easter. When King Henry VIII. laid his hands upon the house, its revenues amounted to £298. 8s. The abbey was surrendered to the crown on the 5th of February, 1538. Coggeshall passed from those who had been lords over it for 416 years; and the abbey soon became a deserted ruin. Change has since been busy at work effacing even this ruin; yet, with the hue which imagination flings around the scene, there appears to us something of an old monastic character still lingering about the spot. As we loiter under the shade of the row of limes by the abbey grange we almost expect to meet a cowed head; and anon we turn and listen for the evening chant. No; it is all imagination. The religious reformer long since made clean work of it, and has left scarcely a wreck of the home of the religious lords of the soil behind. Yonder is the parish church in which Sir William De Coggeshall worshipped; but if we attempt by the aid of a glimmering light from the lamp of tradition to trace out the fane of the ancient brotherhood we find wheat growing in the sanctuary, and thistles springing up where rose the abbey altar. The Rev. E. L. Cutts, in a paper in the "Transactions of the Essex Archæological Society," has graphically described the relics which remain and the recollections which cling around the spot. We owe the following sketch to his pen:—

"Turning off from the main highway, into the cross road which leads to Kelvedon, the visitor will presently come to a bridge over the river which he saw in the distance as he approached the town. The river is, in truth, flowing in an artificial bed, which was made by the monks to get a head of water for the abbey mill; the ditch, a little further north, is the original river, and still asserts its ancient dignity by forming the division between the two parishes of Great and Little Coggeshall and the two Hundreds of Witham and Lexden.

"The house at the corner of the bridge on the left, which stands a little back from the road, is called in the title-deeds the Rood House; very likely it took its name from the erection in the little space before it of a Rood, to mark the entrance to the abbey demesnes. The upper works of the bridge are quite modern, but the three obtusely pointed arches are of brick, of the same kind as those which we shall presently see in the abbey ruins; and the bricks of the bridge are probably of the thirteenth century date.

"At the top of the hill, over the bridge, there is a large substantial farm-house on the right, with a row of cut limes at the margin of the footpath under its old garden wall; it was the Home Grange of the abbey. Opposite to it, on the left, a gate admits us to the abbey lane; and as we pass down the lane we have a very good panoramic view of the town. When Coggeshall was a pretty little town, with its rows of timber gables and louvres peeping over the fruit trees of the gardens which still abundantly divide its streets from one another, and with the bell turrets of its three chapels and its Guild-hall springing up here and there, and the church tower rising over all, the panorama which the monks and their visitors obtained as they passed down the lane was a very pleasant one."

By the lane side, near the bottom, is an old church-like building, with walls of flint rubble mixed with bricks, lancet windows, and a roof of thatch. Morant states it was Little Coggeshall church, and later historians have followed him; but it was probably connected with the abbey, as tradition fixes the place of parish worship more to the west. Mr. Cutts gives a minute description of it, and proceeds:—

“At the bottom of the lane we come in front of the farm-house, which is built on the site of the abbey, and has a few fragments of the old abbey buildings incorporated in it. On the right hand are some of the abbey buildings of the thirteenth century, converted to farm purposes, but very little altered; and a detached building of the same age, locally called the Monk house. In the field on the left of the farm-house the inequalities of the ground indicate the existence of foundations over an extensive space; some of these have been traced.

“In the instance of these remains at Coggeshall it has been found impossible, after careful study, to appropriate them as forming any portion of the cloister buildings, or to identify with certainty to what other portion of the monastery they belonged. Tradition says that the abbey church was somewhere in the field on the north side of the present farm-house. We have already said that there are inequalities of the ground over a large space of this field, which indicate the existence of foundations and overthrown masses of buildings. Some day, accident or research may reveal the exact site of the church, and then it will probably not be found difficult to trace out the site of the other cloister buildings. In the summer of 1851, a long continued drought parched the grass over some of the foundations which were very near the surface of the soil, and left a plan of these foundations so clearly defined on the field that it was easy to draw a measured plan of them on paper. Some little excavation was subsequently made upon the site; the existence of foundations where they had been indicated by the withered grass was verified; but they were found to be mere foundations of rubble work only a foot and a half in height; a few fragments of moulded brick were found, indicating that the buildings, of which these were the foundations, were of the same date as the greater part of the existing thirteenth century buildings; but so little of interest was found that the work was soon abandoned.

“The earliest portion of the old buildings which remains is a massive fragment, which stands curiously in the midst of the present dwelling house, like a great mass of primitive granite surrounded by more modern strata. It consists of part of an arcade, running east and west; only one arch remains, of pointed form, and turned with plain unmoulded bricks of the shape and size already described as peculiar to the bricks used in this abbey; it springs on one side from a respond, and is supported on the other by a circular brick pillar with a stone capital. Part of the wall over the arch still exists, and in it is the lower part of a clerestory window. The circular pillar is formed of bricks, whose outer edge is moulded so as to form portions of a circular circumference; its stone capital is of the kind called a cushion capital; taken together with the pointed arch which it supports, it indicates that this fragment was built towards the close of the twelfth century. Forming, as this fragment manifestly does, a portion of a building which had an aisle and a clerestory, and ran east and west, it would be a natural conjecture that it formed part of the abbey church, but for the three following reasons:—first, that the building could not on that supposition be reconciled with the invariable arrangement of a Cistercian church and cloister buildings; secondly, that the pointed arch which occurs here is commonly assumed by antiquarians not to have been introduced into England until about ten years after the date of the dedication of Coggeshall abbey church; and third, that the local tradition declares the site of the church to be in the field to the north of the farm-house.

“There are two thick walls in the modern house, which are probably portions of the original abbey buildings, and numbers of carved stones of the same date lie about the premises; a large transition Norman capital is used as a step to the doorway of that building; a smaller capital of the same date is inserted to stop a hole at the north-east corner, and another is built into the east window of the chapel barn.”

In some of the buildings, one of which was taken to have been an ambulatory, stone and Purbeck marble are used; and one room has clearly had a row of pillars and arches down the centre.

“Two or three hundred yards (continues the able paper from which we have so largely quoted) south of the building last described was the abbey mill; a very important and usual appendage of a Cistercian monastery. There is still a flour mill on the site, which bears the name of the Abbey Mill. In the course of some alterations in the



garden in front of the dwelling-house adjoining the mill, in 1851, traces of buildings were found.

"There are one or two other places connected with the abbey to which we must briefly direct the visitor's attention. First, to the grove on the opposite side of the river to the present farm-house; it probably existed originally in its present condition as a place of recreation either for the abbot or for the convent.

"A few hundred yards south of the abbey mill are the remains of another important item in the monastic economy—the fish-ponds. The piece of ground which contains them is called the Pond Wick; it is bounded on the east by the last reach of the artificial river, and on the three remaining sides by a moat supplied with water from the river. There are traces of three stews, and there was a room for a fourth, but only one now remains, and that within a few years has been considerably diminished in size. A few years ago Pond Wick was shaded by a fine grove of trees, and was a pleasant place; very likely it was so also in the old days of the abbey, and tempted the venerable fathers to come out of a summer's evening and pace under the shady trees, absorbed in grave and godly meditations; or to recline in groups on the turfy sloping banks and recreate themselves with innocent gossip, while they threw crumbs to the great tame carp in the stew ponds.

"Holfield Grange was one of the abbey granges, and it is very probable that on the sunny side of the hill, south of the present mansion house, were the vineyards which supplied the monks with the thin wine with which they were content. The place is still known as the Vineyard; indeed, it is only some fifty years since the last vines were rooted up, and some of the wine which was made from them even still exists in the Holfield Grange cellars."

The Holfield Grange referred to was granted, after the suppression, to Clement Smith, of Little Baddow; and in the sixteenth century it was purchased by Henry Osgood, gentleman, who formed the park, and converted the house into a good seat. His daughter brought it in marriage to John Hanbury, Esq., a rich Virginian merchant, who greatly improved the mansion, and established here the old county family of the Osgood-Hanburys. The mansion stands about a mile and a half from the town. It is of red brick, with a park and delightful grounds around it, a fit home for a great trader of the metropolis and a country gentleman—characters which are united in the Hanbury family. The other property of the abbey passed to various owners. The manor and other estates were, in the seventeenth century, in the Mayhew family; afterwards the former was sold to Nehemiah Lyde, of Hackney, whose daughter carried it in marriage to Richard Du Cane, Esq. Charles Du Cane, Esq., M.P., is now the lord. Little Coggeshall Hall was from the early age of King Stephen in the De Coggeshall family, which possessed large estates in the county.

The church, which stands in the highest part of the town, is a noble building in the perpendicular style, and has been thoroughly and tastefully restored in the last few years. Dr. John Owen, one of the old nonconformist divines, and chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, held the vicarage of this church. He took his degrees at Oxford, and in 1642 published his first work, "A Display of Arminianism," which brought him into notice. Cromwell, after hearing one sermon from him, was so struck with his matter and style that he appointed him his chaplain, and made him dean of Christchurch and vice-chancellor of Oxford. On the death of the Protector he was stripped of his honours; and though Clarendon endeavoured to win him over, he refused to conform. He then formed a congregation in London; and in conjunction with Baxter and others, constituted the Pinners' Hall Weekly Lecture. He is described as having been amongst "the more learned and rational of his party." In the church are several monuments, one of them to Colonel Townshend, an officer who distinguished himself in the wars of Marlborough; and on a black marble slab is the simple inscription:—

"Here lieth the body of Sir Mark Guyon, knight: A.D. 1690."



In the church-yard there is a stone to Thomas Hanse—who died a bankrupt—and his friends having engraved upon it

“Lord, thy grace is free,—  
Why not for me?”

One of his suffering creditors, it is recorded, wrote beneath it—

“And the Lord answered and said,  
Because thy debts ain’t paid.”

Hitcham’s endowed charity school, for which a handsome building in the Elizabethan style has just been erected in West-street, at a cost of about £1,000, owes its foundation to Sir Robert Hitcham, Knight, of Ipswich, who, by his will, in 1636, settled the castle and manor of Framlingham and Saxtead in trust to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, for the erection of a workhouse at Framlingham, to set the poor of that parish, Debenham, and Coggeshall to work, and to found almshouses and schools. For a time alms-people and poor children were sent from Coggeshall, but this being inconvenient, disputes and lawsuits followed; and in 1658 the parliament of Oliver Cromwell decided that Coggeshall should have £150. a-year to support a workhouse and school, bind out apprentices, and send some of the grammar scholars to Pembroke Hall College. The schoolmaster is now appointed by the college, and the number of scholars is thirty. There are four almshouses in Back-lane, built with charity money on land given by Joseph Greenwood, in 1795, and the inmates are appointed by the parish authorities.

The other charities of the parish are 23 acres of land (six of which are garden) at Halsted, purchased with £200. left by Thomas Paycock, in 1580, for wood and red and white herrings for the poor of Great and Little Coggeshall; the stallage at the fair of the ground on which the old market-house stood, yielding about 20s.; two cottages in Back-lane, built with poor’s-money; a moiety of a rent-charge of £15. out of East Tilbury rectory, purchased with £400. left by Johan Smith, in 1601; a rent-charge of 32s. out of a house in East-street, purchased with £30. left by Jane Gooday, in 1618; a rent-charge of £10. 8s. out of Windmill Field, purchased with £200. left by Thomas Guyon, in 1664; a rent-charge of £13. out of Highfield Farm, left by Sir Mark Guyon, in 1678; houses in Stoneham-street, and the clock tower, left by Samuel Crane, in 1669; the rents of three tenements in Church-street, left by Anthony Hibben; and £8. a-year out of Roman’s Farm, East Hanningfield, left for the poor of Little Coggeshall by Ann Richardson.—These charities are distributed in fuel, bread, and clothing for the poor.

**MARK’S HALL, THE SEAT OF THE HONYWOOD FAMILY.**—The mansion and its domain, absorbing nearly the whole of the parish, adjoins Coggeshall on the north-west. It takes its name from the De Merc, or as it was afterwards called, Merks hall family, who held the estate for 500 years, from the Conquest down to the time of Queen Elizabeth, when John Markeshall sold it. In 1605 it was purchased by Robert Honywood, Esq., of Charing, in Kent, of a family which can be traced as occupying a position of importance at Herewood or Hune-wood in that county from a time just subsequent to the Conquest. This gentleman added a fine front, in the Tudor style, to the venerable mansion of the Mercs, which has subsequently undergone considerable modernizing improvements; and standing on a rising ground, in the midst of an extensive deer park, and with beautiful gardens attached to it, the Hall, which for the last 250 years has been the home of the Honywoods, may be ranked amongst the most pleasant

and elegant seats in the county. The family, since it settled in Essex, has taken an active part in public affairs; and several of its members have won titles and honours on the battle-field and in the council. Sir Robert, a soldier tried in the wars of the Palatinate, took part on the side of the parliament in the war against King Charles, and was made a member of the council of state. Sir Thomas was one of the chief committee-men of the county. With an armed band he barred the high road against the royalists in their march to Colchester, compelling them to take the way by Braintree; and with his militia he vigorously aided in pressing on the siege and the surrender. He led a regiment of Essex men at the battle of Worcester; and subsequently he represented this county in Cromwell's parliament. The family, too, has produced a female remarkable in her way, of whom a painting is to be seen in the great hall; and in the handsome modern little church, which was built by General Honynwood, there is a monument raised to her by her eldest son, with her statue in marble, kneeling, and this inscription:—

"Mary Waters, the daughter and co-heir of Robt. Waters, of Lenham, in Kent, wife of Robt. Honynwood, of Charing, in Kent, Esq., her only husband. She had at her decease, lawfully descended from her, 367 children—16 of her own body, 114 grandchildren, 228 in the third generation, and 9 in the fourth. She led a most pious life, and in a christian manner died here at Markshall, in the 93d year of her age, and the 44th of her widowhood, the 16th of May, Anno Domini 1620."

She fell at one period into a fit of religious melancholy, and Fuller gives in substance the following further history of her:—

"Being much afflicted in mind, many ministers repaired to her, and amongst the rest Mr. John Fox, the martyrologist. All his counsels proved ineffectual, insomuch that in the agony of her soul, having a Venice-glass in her hand, she burst out into this expression—"I am as surely damned as this glass is broken," throwing it with violence upon the ground; but the glass rebounded again, and was taken up whole and entire, being still preserved in the family. However she took no comfort thereat, but continued in her former disconsolate condition; till at last God suddenly shot comfort like lightning into her soul, which once entered ever remained therein, so that she led the remainder of her life in spiritual gladness. In the days of Queen Mary she used to visit the prisons to comfort and relieve the poor persecuted protestants. She was present at the burning of Mr. Bradford, in West Smithfield, and resolved to see the end of his suffering, though the press was so great that her shoes were trodden off, and she was forced to go barefoot from Smithfield to St. Martin's-le-Grand before she could furnish herself with a new pair."

The branch of the family first planted in Essex became extinct in 1693, on the death of John Lambeth Honynwood, Esq., and another offshoot of the Kentish tree was transplanted here in the person of Robert Honynwood, Esq., of Charing, who succeeded. Again there has just been another engrafting, in consequence of the recent death, without issue, of Wm. Phillip Honynwood, Esq.; and Sir Courtenay Honynwood, of Evington, has succeeded to the property.

On turning to the south-east, and pursuing our track along the Hundred on that side, we enter FERRING, a large parish, with lands equalling in fertility any in the county. The chief manor of Feering Bury has belonged, since the Reformation, to the see of London, having been bestowed upon it as part of the spoil of Westminster Abbey; and in its old moated manor-house, Ridley the martyr, and Bonner, the fierce persecutor of Mary's reign, are said to have occasionally resided. PATTISWICK, though lying on the opposite side of Coggeshall, was originally a hamlet of Feering, and up to 1313 the inhabitants were compelled to bury their dead at the mother church. The Bishop of London is also lord of this manor; and the Hall had formerly a large

park belonging to it.\* **INWORTH**, though a large parish, extending up to Tiptree Heath, is not mentioned in Domesday Book. Its little village stands on a pleasant eminence. J. H. Blood, Esq., is the lord of the manor. Though the wooden turret of its small antique church presents little attraction to the eye in the distance, we shall find as we approach it that the building is not devoid of interest. The Roman tiles in the porch as we enter; the remains of a Roman tessellated pavement upon which we tread; the fine Norman arch opening into the chancel; the old richly-carved screen, and the ancient piscina near the altar, call up memories from the grave, and people the sacred and quiet spot with shadows of the past.† Adjacent to Inworth is **MESSING**, a parish of which the Earl of Verulam is the lord; and according to some modern antiquarians, this is the spot where Boadicea fought her great battle with the Romans. The idea has been taken up by some to whose opinion we should be disposed to pay respect; but when we come to examine the assertion we find it rests on a mere fanciful interpretation of the name, and a few other slight circumstances which it is always exceedingly easy to fit into a theory when the theory itself has been adopted. This parish, like all the tract up to Colchester, was familiar to the Roman. This is shown by the relics which have been found here. We cannot, however, reconcile the events which took place with the return of Boadicea from the sack of St. Alban's and the attack on London, to fight her last battle near the still smouldering ruins of Camulodunum; and must, therefore, still retain the strong position we have already taken up at Ambersbury Banks. In later times this parish was rendered of some importance by the Baynards, who had a castellated mansion here called Baynard's Castle; but this has disappeared from the land; and we find little now to detain our steps save the handsome church, which was greatly enlarged and restored in 1841. At the east end is a noble window of richly-stained glass of some antiquity, representing Faith, Hope, and Charity, believed to have been given to the sacred edifice by Sir Charles Chibborne more than 250 years ago. In the north wall formerly lay the wooden figure of a cross-legged knight, a Templar or veritable crusader, said to be that of Sir William De Messing, the founder of the edifice; but a devout antiquary who a few years ago made a pilgrimage to the spot, for the purpose of taking a drawing of the relic, found that a former barbarian vicar had handed it over to the church clerk as a piece of useless lumber, and the venerable old warrior had done duty as a Christmas log. There are four almshouses in the parish, originally given, it is believed, by the Chibborne family; and two rent-charges of 40s. each, one for the poor, and the other for the vicar for preaching two sermons, left by Hanameel Chibborne.

In the direction of Colchester lies the little parish of **EASTHORPE**, the lordship of which belongs to the Hon. Colonel Onslow. In the reign of King John, William Blund, who held it under the De Plane family, obtained from the king the peculiar privileges "that he and his men, or tenants, of Birch and Easthorpe, be exempt of suits of shires and hundreds, and aids to sheriffs and their bailiffs, and all pleas and complaints belonging to them, and safely to travel throughout the king's dominions, paying the proper customs for their merchandizes."—There is a rent-charge for the poor of 7s. 2½d., left about 1600 by the Hon. Kingston Clarke.

\* The poor have a rent of £2. 12s. out of Hall Farm, left by an unknown donor.

† The only charity is an acre and a quarter of land left by Edward Townsend, in 1740.

**BIRCH — THE SEAT OF CHARLES GRAY ROUND, ESQ.** — Turning southward, we enter Great and Little Birch, now forming one parish, with a scattered village on a pleasant acclivity, beyond which are seen the park and plantations of the Hall, the home of Charles Gray Round, Esq. It appears to have been one of the early inhabited spots in the land, as not only Roman, but even a few ancient British remains, have been exhumed in the locality. In later times, too, it was a place of note. A short distance from the church of St. Peter, at which the inhabitants of the united parishes worship—the temple of Little Birch having for centuries lain a ruin—is a large mount, encompassed with a trench, and this is popularly believed to have been the site of Birch Castle, built by the Gernons in this locality, and which Sir Ralph Gernon fortified against King Henry III. Probably tradition is right, and here arose the grim bulwark of the old Norman. We incline, however, to the opinion which has been expressed, that it was raised on defensive foundations of far anterior date, and that this mount and trench were part of the stupendous works connected with those at Lexden Heath, and other parts around Colchester, provided by the Romans for the protection of the ancient Camulodunum. Be this so or not, the dull dark castle of the Norman chieftain, which stood as a reproach and a terror to the Saxon, has passed away—even its site, it is thus seen, has become matter of conjecture; and we turn, with thankful pride at the change time has wrought in our social system, to the modern Hall, in which the lord of the surrounding lands wrings not unpaid labour from trembling vassals, but soothes the sufferings of the poor, stimulates the healthful energies of industry, and needs no protecting walls but those which the respect of his neighbours build around him. The old Hall was a very ancient edifice, built originally, it is believed, by the Tendring family, who held the estates in the reign of Edward II., and it was enlarged by the Goldings, the possessors of it in the sixteenth century. In 1724 it was purchased of the heirs of Lady Dyer by James Round, Esq., an opulent citizen of London, who thus planted in the county a family which has borne an active part in its public business, as magistrates, sheriffs, and often as representatives in parliament. Its possessions have increased in the county around, and especially through an intermarriage in the last century with Miss Creffield, an heiress, which eventually gave to the owner of Birch Hall the estate of the Grays, including the proprietorship of Colchester Castle. The mansion was formerly decorated with the escutcheons of the families who raised it; but in 1728 it was partially rebuilt and cased with brick by James Round, Esq. The present possessor entirely demolished it about 15 years ago, and has erected an elegant modern mansion of stone, in the plain Ionic style, from designs by the late Mr. Hopper. It stands a little more to the southward than the old Hall, near the brow of a picturesque acclivity, which affords a fine view over the neighbouring woodland and village. On climbing the hill from Heckford-bridge we enter the domain, and pass through lands partaking of a forestal character. But ere we reach the Hall we turn aside to an interesting feature in the landscape, which is seen nestling amongst the trees on the left—the ruins of Little Birch church, with the roof gone, and the wintry storm whistling through its arches; but the walls of the little sanctuary and the tower, parts of which are of great antiquity, as testified by the Roman bricks intermixed in them, are still standing, wreathed in the green ivy which has taken charge of the religious

remnant. We are told that 200 years ago the once sacred edifice lay thus desolate ; and though there is some mention of burials here at a later date, we should be almost inclined to say that the Sabbath bell has been silenced in this crumbling tower since the Reformation, and that the voice of prayer has not been heard within these walls since the rich-robed priest of Rome was seen at yonder piscina, which still remains near where the altar stood. Turning from this ruin, a few steps bring us to the main or north-east front of the mansion, which is adorned with a handsome portico, supported by fine Ionic columns. Passing to the south-west, the eye—first impressed with the chaste architectural grandeur of the building, and the five noble columns which on this side extend from basement to balustrade—turns to the beautiful view which is here obtained from the raised terrace and the windows of the apartments above. From the spot on which we stand, the green sward of the park slopes gracefully to the valley below, with a belting of thick woodland to the left ; and on the opposite acclivity, about half-a-mile distant, above the trees which shut out the sight of the neighbouring hamlet, is seen the tapering spire of the parish church, flinging a subdued and holy tone over the rural picture. An open arcade runs along the whole of the south-east point, supported by a row of Ionic columns. Above is a balcony with a light ornamental balustrade. From hence we look down upon a terrace of gravelled walk and green-sward, below which are parterres and tastefully-planted pleasure grounds ; the lawn extending down to a broad lake of four or five acres, fed by a little streamlet, and the margin studded here and there with fine old trees. The rising ground on the opposite bank, thickly wooded, forms a dark frame or back ground to the picture ; and pleasant walks wind round the water-side or wander into the neighbouring plantations. At the north-eastern end of the mansion is a large conservatory ; and beyond, in this direction, lie the domestic offices, sheltered by trees and shrubs.

Entering the vestibule of the mansion by the grand portico, we recognise a relic of the old Moot-hall of Colchester—the corporate arms which decorated it—rescued at the time of its demolition, and carefully worked into the masonry of the mantel-piece. We pass on to the hall, from which rises the grand staircase, leading to the suites of rooms above. From hence we wander to the library, looking out to the south-west upon the scene we have already described. It is a spacious apartment, 36 feet by 23 feet ; and its ample shelves are stored in every direction with a rich collection of fine old works in divinity, and classical and historical literature. Amongst the latter is a fine large-paper copy of Morant's works, with various notes, corrections, and emendations in the author's handwriting : this was Morant's own copy, given by him to his friend Mr. Gray ; and it is a precious relic of our county historian. The other principal apartments are large and lofty, are chastely decorated, and most of them command delightful views about the grounds. The drawing and dining rooms are each 34 feet by 23 feet ; and though we have reluctantly passed over the paintings in the other parts of the mansion, in the latter we are compelled to linger awhile over the family and other portraits, and works of some of the first masters, which adorn its walls. Over the mantel-piece is one of the characteristic works of Snyders, in his very best style ; from which we turn to "A View at Walmer," from the hand of Morland,—to "A Head of St. Julian," by Murillo, a very rare picture,—to the canvas on which we trace the creative touches of Salvator Rosa,—or to the



family or other portraits, several of which are evidently by master hands, and include amongst them good paintings of Chief Justice Littleton and Sir Harbottle Grimston, member for Colchester, and Speaker of the Commons in the parliament of the Restoration. As we prepared to quit the mansion, and again paced the floor of the hall, we could not help recollecting a gathering which annually takes place here—a mission meeting for the spread of the word of God—and contrasting it with the scene which we might have witnessed in the old times, when the Mountfitchets or the Tendrings held rule over Birch, and the armed tenantry mustered for some deed of war or wild revenge, or the rough half-brutal revelry of the retainers shook the hall—sounds now happily exchanged for the pleading of religion and the soul-soothing message of peace.

The church, which stands in the parish of Great Birch, was rebuilt a few years ago, principally by the liberality of Mr. Round, who is patron of the living in alternation with the bishop, and is now erecting a commodious rectory-house at his own expense. A good school-house, and dwellings for the master and mistress, were built by Mrs. Round about 13 years ago.

The charities of the parish consist of a rent-charge of 10s. out of Churchfield and Castle Hill, left by Roger March, in 1614, and 20s. out of 20 acres of land, left by Robert Carr, in 1622.

EAST DONYLAND extends from Birch, running up between the boundary of Colchester and Winstree Hundred, to the Colne, including the village of Rowhedge, where most of the inhabitants and a fleet of about fifty boats are employed in the fishing trade. The parish belonged to St. John's Abbey, Colchester, and after the dissolution it passed, with other large estates, to Sir Francis Jobson, who became a man of wealth and note in the land, through having married a daughter of Viscount Lisle, the natural son of Edward IV., by his mistress, Jane Shore, whose beauty, prosperity, fall, and death are associated in the tales of our early recollection with snatches of mysterious romance. The estate was purchased in 1730 by Daniel Gansel, Esq., who improved the Hall and formed the park, which afterwards came into the Havens family, and it is now the seat of W. R. Havens, Esq., the lord of the manor. The old church being much decayed, it was abandoned, being in an inconvenient situation, and part of the materials were used in building a new one at Rowhedge, in 1838. There is a cottage in the parish given for the poor by — Kingsbury about 1718.

We have now reached the Colne, and extending along the opposite bank we see the parish of WIVENHOE, which nominally belongs to this Hundred, but appears as if it had strayed across the water, or the river had altered its course since the ancient landmarks were set up. By its position it properly belongs to Tendring, and for that Hundred we reserve its history.

THE DANE'S SKIN AT COPFORD.—On retracing our steps to the northward, we enter Copford, lying near the high road and the railway. The Hall, said to have been built upon the site of an ancient nunnery, is a good mansion standing in a small park, with several pieces of ornamental water, and is the residence of J. Fyske Harrison, Esq., the lord of the manor. Most of this estate belonged to the see of London from a time before the Conquest to the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and Bishop Bonner seems to have occasionally made it his country retreat: the planting of the shaded walk to the church is locally believed to have been his handiwork. The church, with its



massive walls, which formerly supported an arch over the whole of the building, its circular east end, and its old entrance door, will tempt the traveller to turn towards the antique fabric. This door is ornamented with rude flourishes of rusty iron work, which formerly fastened securely to the wood beneath a thick substance outwardly resembling parchment—similar to that at the church at Hadstock. Tradition, which takes maternal charge of many a marvellous tale, connects this leather-like and shrivelled coating with the system of savage retribution found in the code of justice in the olden time, but happily blotted from its pages in the present century. Some Danes, saith this authority, robbed the church—considered one of the most heinous of crimes in the mediæval ages—and were subjected to the fearful process of flaying alive, their skins, carefully preserved, being thus affixed to the door as a terrible memento of the wretches who had dared to raise their sacrilegious hands against the house of God. The peculiar character of the door appears to have first attracted notice on the restoration of the church in 1690, when some beautiful ancient fresco paintings were found beneath the desecrating whitewash on the walls; and “an old man at Colchester said that in his young time he heard his master say that he had read in an old history that the church of Copford was robbed by Danes, and their skins nailed to the doors.” This is the foundation of the tradition. Anxious to test it, we procured a piece of the skin, of which time and curious visitors have now left scarcely a shred. This we submitted to a scientific friend, skilled in anatomy, who, after softening and subjecting it to rigid examination, pronounced it to be “part of the skin of a fair-haired human being”—thus confirming, to a considerable extent, the tale of torture which garrulous tradition has told to her wondering auditors.

There are three tenements in the parish, with gardens, left by Allen Mountjoy in 1694, for the residences of poor labouring men belonging to the church and not receiving relief.

Adjacent is STANWAY, lying partly upon the great Roman road, and in Saxon times a very extensive lordship, which belonged to Earl Harold, and therefore fell to the conquering Norman. Most of the lands are now freehold. It has a pleasant village on the banks of a small river, and several good manors scattered over the parish. The Hall, on a picturesque hill by the road side, with traces of defensive mounds, and remnants of an ancient moat about it, is the seat of George De Horne, Esq. Oliver's is about a mile below; and New Oliver's is the residence of T. J. Turner, Esq.; these take their name from the Oliver family, which held the estate as early as the time of Henry III. In ancient times—that is, prior to 1366—there appear to have been two parishes, Great and Little Stanway. The church of the former stood near the Hall, but it suffered greatly in Cromwell's time—probably from the hands of the soldiers during the siege of Colchester, and its walls and tower are now deserted ruins. The present parish church, by the road side, was anciently called the chapel of St. Allbright; and Suckling considered that, from its dedication to a Saxon saint, its position—so convenient to pilgrims and travellers on the old Roman highway, and the shape of its doors and windows, it has claims to be considered a veritable Saxon pile. At Battle-end, a mile and a half from the village, is a handsome district church, erected in 1845 at a cost of £2,200, which was raised by subscription. Gliding onwards in our journey, we pass

through the Tey, three ancient parishes, which gave name to the family of Tey, long of high standing and importance in the county, but it died out of its records in 1592. The manor of Marks Tey, which took its name from the ancient family of Merc, belongs to Robert Chaplin, Esq., of the Hall; the chief manor of Great Tey is held by Robert Hills, Esq., of Colne Park; and of Little Tey the Bishop of London is the lord. Close to the Tey is ALDHAM, a pleasant little village: T. B. Western, Esq., of Felix Hall, is lord of the two manors.\* On the right, towards Colchester, is WEST BERGHOLT, the chief manorial rights of which are in the Round family; and here we come upon a circular entrenchment, part of the defences of ancient Colchester, which Stukely regarded—but on what ground we can scarcely understand—as the site of the palace of the good old King Cunobeline, when he reigned in state over the kingdom of Essex.† Next to it, on the north of the Colne, is FORDHAM: Earl De Grey is lord of the Hall, and O. S. Onley, Esq., of the other two manors.‡ CHAPPEL, adjacent, or Pontisbright, as it was called of old, was formerly part of Great Tey, and its lands lie in the manors of that parish. A chapel was built here in 1355, for the convenience of the inhabitants; but disputes with the vicars of Great Tey as to tithes and other matters becoming frequent, in 1533 the ville had its own priest assigned to it; and it is now distinct in boundaries and rates from the mother parish.—The poor have the rent of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land and a cottage, given by Robert Hoolde, in 1454.

THE COLNES—THE PARK AND PRIORY.—Adjoining to Chappel, touching on Marks-hall, and extending up to Halsted, lie the four Colnes, with the river from which they take their name winding through the midst of them, watering a fertile valley, three of its neat villages rising on the northern side. Earls Colne, which may fairly be called a town, standing on the southern bank, and several good mansions with their belting woodlands scattered over the undulating landscape, the fair scene presents a very favourable sample of the rural districts of the county. Yonder, in Colne Engaine, the farthest western parish—which takes its name from the great family of Engaine, of Upminster, the owners of it as early as 1218—is Colne Park, the delightful seat of Robert Hills, Esq., the lord of the manors of Goldingtons and Shreeves. This property belonged to the priory of St. Botolph, in Colchester; but after passing to various other owners it was purchased in 1762 by Michael Hills, Esq.; and it was bequeathed by his successor to Phillip, second son of Thomas Astle, Esq., of Battersea, keeper of the records in the Tower, and who, in accordance with the will, assumed the name and arms of Hills by royal licence in 1790. This gentleman fronted the old mansion with white brick, and gave it an air of modern elegance. From him it descended to its present possessor, who has

\* The poor have a share of Love's charity, consisting of 26 acres of land in Larden, purchased with £120 left by Thomas Love in 1565, for the benefit of various parishes; and a farm of 16A. 0R. 16P. given by an unknown donor. Some land producing £2. a year has been lost.

† The church clerk has three rods of land given by an unknown donor; and the poor have a share of Love's charity.

‡ The church clerk has a rood of land, and the poor have a share of Love's charity. Lady Huntingdon's chapel was endowed by Robert Spark with £700.; and William Ellis, in 1797, left £1,000. to secure yearly £10. to the minister, £1. to the clerk, £2. to the person who teaches singing, £2. to be distributed in bread to the poor of the congregation, £10. to the minister or other person to teach ten poor children, and the remainder for repairs, &c., of the building. The minister has the farm called Ho and £75. for the other charities is charged on it.

enlarged the house, added to it a tasteful Grecian portico, and erected in the beautiful grounds by which the seat is surrounded a lofty and elegant Ionic column of Portland stone to the memory of his father. The manor of Colne Engaine belongs to Christ's Hospital, to which institution it was given by Lady Mary Ramsey, in 1590. The monks of Roman Catholic days showed their good taste in fixing upon the quiet nooks and pleasant places of the land. Accordingly, we find a party of them made the Colnes their dwelling for fully five hundred years, till the angry tide of religious reform disturbed them in their honied hive. The dark robe and the cowed head have been often seen in these grounds and pathways; and the traveller has paused on this hill-top to listen to the sound of the monastery bell or the music of the evening chant, as it came swelling up from yonder mansion by the river side, in the parish of Earls Colne, still called the Priory, and which now, converted into the home of a country gentleman, retains nought of its ancient character but its name. This house was founded as early as 1100, by the great family of the De Veres, who were lords of this and the adjacent parish of White Colne, and had a noble mansion near the church, called Hall Place; but after the foundation of the Priory they built themselves a house within its precincts, in which they occasionally dwelt. The institution of this monastic community is said to have been originally an offering of gratitude by Aubrey De Vere to the abbey of Abbingdon, the abbot, who was well skilled in physic—as was frequently the case with the monks of those days—having rescued his son from a dangerous sickness. It was at first a cell to that abbey, dedicated to St. Mary and St. John the Evangelist, and was inhabited by monks of the Black or Benedictine order. It was a spacious building of timber, surrounded by brick walls, which enclosed twelve acres; and the founder—who, as whitening age stole over him, sickened of the pomp and splendour of his high station, became a monk within its walls—endowed it with the church, demesne lands, and tithes in the parish, the churches of Walter Belchamp, Dovercourt, Great Bentley, Beauchamp Roothing; tithes in Hedingham; and considerable other property, which was largely added to by others of the same family, the Montchenseys, Bigots, and De Mandevilles. The priory church is described as a stately edifice, with a lofty tower of flint and free-stone, two noble aisles, the chapel of Our Lady, in which stood the high altar, and a choir. The De Veres appear to have regarded this monastery with peculiar favour. Many of that noble family, during five centuries, were buried within its sanctuary, in which were to be seen their effigies, with the characteristics of crusaders, knights of the garter, lord chamberlains, and other high officers of state. Every vestige, however, of the sacred building is gone. A range of stables occupies the site. Where the high altar stood is a dung-heap. The groom whistles unconcernedly as he curries his horses above the mouldering ashes of the mighty Earls of Oxford, of whose stately monuments a few broken fragments are found at the parish church, into which they were confusedly thrown when the Priory was destroyed,—others, it is said, being used for chimney-pieces and stone-work adornments in the modern mansion. On the suppression of the Priory, when its yearly income was valued at £175. 14s. 8½d., Henry VIII. gave it back, with the estates, to the descendants of the original founder; and it was held by the De Veres till the extravagant scapegrace of the family squandered his patrimony, when this property was sold to his steward, Roger Harlac-

kenden, for £2,000. It afterwards passed to the Androwes, Wale, and Holgate families. By the heiress of the latter it was brought in marriage to the Rev. C. Carwardine; and the Priory, which is a manor of itself, is now the seat of H. H. Carwardine, Esq. A great part of the house, however, has been pulled down, and the remainder cased in brick, and so improved that scarcely a trace remains of the times of its black Benedictine lords. Colne Place, another good mansion in this parish, is the seat of Mrs. Gee. Wakes Hall, Wakes Colne, is also an elegant house, erected on the site of the ancient edifice by Henry Skingsley, Esq., the lord and occupant; Fishers belongs to the Brett family. The Rev. W. Hume is lord of Barwick Hall, in White Colne; but Ingledesthorpe and Bert Hall are the property of O. Hanbury, Esq.

A free grammar school in Earls Colne was founded by the Rev. C. Swallow, in 1539, and endowed with lands in Stisted, Ardleigh, Messing, Marks Tey, and Coggeshall, for 30 poor children of this parish and the parishes just named. The school was one of high repute, but it sank wretchedly in the last century, when the property was irregularly dealt with. The Court of Chancery, however, has redressed this; its endowments, now comprising 170 acres of land and several tenements, are well applied; and under the mastership of the Rev. J. Clarryvance, the school is full.—The charities of this parish consist of 14 acres of land called Westons, at Wickham St. Paul's, purchased with money left by Mary Poynter, in 1734; the interest of £50. out of savings of this estate; and a rent-charge of £2. left by George Cressener, in 1722, out of property in Golden-lane, London.—The poor of Colne Engaine have the rent of two acres of land, left by William Little, in 1697. The sexton has an acre of land called the Sexton's Orchard.—In Wakes Colne, John Allyson and John Boteler gave, in 1460, 8*l.* 1*s.* of land and the town house, for the poor and the repair of the church; and White Colne has the rent of the Town Field, of two acres, believed to have been given by Mr. Guirliphant: anciently there were three almshouses in the parish, but the Charity Commissioners do not mention them.

After quitting the Colnes we approach the vale of the Stour, above which stands the picturesque little village of MOUNT BURES, opposite Bures St. Mary, on the Suffolk side of the river. The mount from which it takes its name is a large artificial earth-work near the church, 80 feet high, covering an acre and a half of ground, and surrounded by a dry moat. There is not a shred of record, not a whisper of tradition, to explain its origin. By some it has been attributed to the Saxons, and it may have been raised by them to defend the passage of the river which formed the boundary of the kingdom of Essex; or it may have been an outpost of the Roman fortifications of Camulodunum. The parish for ages was owned by the Sackvilles: the manorial rights are now in the Bouchier family.\* Following the course of the river we enter WORMINGFORD, which in Edward the Confessor's reign was in Earl Godwin, and after the Conquest came to the Gernon or Mountfitchet family. For a long period the property was in the Waldegraves; and the manors—the Hall and Church Hall, which belonged to the nuns of Wikes—are now owned by J. J. Tufnell, Esq., having been purchased by S. Tufnell in the last century.† The next two parishes, GREAT and LITTLE HORKESELEY, are not mentioned in Domesday Book,

\* The poor have a share in Love's Charity.

† The poor have a share of Love's charity. James Robinson, in 1832, provided that

as they then formed part of the lordship of Nayland, in Suffolk. They stand at a point where a bridge spans the Stour, leading to the neighbouring county. The old and opulent family of Swynborne were in possession of Little Horkesley as early as 1324; the Hall was their seat; and William Swynborne appears to have been the founder of the church. In 1651 the manor was owned by Sir John Denham, the poet; and he being a stout adherent of Charles II., it was seized as the estate of a traitor, and sold by the parliamentary commissioners for £3,230. 9s. 7d. It now belongs to the Rev. J. C. B. Warren. The church, a handsome building on an eminence, is rich in monumental remains. Besides the beautiful altar tomb of Sir Thomas Swynborne and his father, of the date of 1412, the marble group representing Lady Marney and her two husbands, one on each side of her—placed here in accordance with her will—it contains three figures, two of crusaders, and the other of a female, carved in oak, and of enormous stature, believed to be some of the De Horkesley family; but Suckling found “these highly interesting relics, upon which the antiquary could gaze for hours with delight, removed from their original situation, and barbarously thrust into an obscure corner of the church, covered with dust and rubbish,” and we regret to say that little has since been done to redeem them from this degradation. A house on the north side of the church, belonging to Mr. Joscelyne, occupies the site of a small priory—a cell to the great house at Thetford—founded for Cluniac monks in the reign of Henry I. It was one of the small-fry which Wolsey snapped up just before the Reformation as a part of the endowment of the college he had planned at Oxford, its income being then valued at £27. 7s. 11d. a-year. The soil of Great Horkesley belongs chiefly to Earl De Grey and Lord Ashburton; and near the ancient farm of Woodhouse are a trench and other military works, generally regarded as part of an ancient camp; but some antiquaries consider them to be remains of an ancient British oppidum, raised before the Roman name was heard or the Roman power felt in this neighbourhood. There is a little ancient building, with a church-like character about it, standing by the side of the causeway, and this is supposed to have been the Chapel of Our Lady, founded by John Falcon, and endowed with lands and tenements for a priest to sing mass therein. In the south of the parish is a small chapel-of ease, built by J. L. Green, Esq., in 1837.\* Of Boxted there is little of olden interest to record; but it has become a point of pilgrimage for agricultural inquirers of the present day, as the home of a man who has done much to improve the cultivation of the soil and the breed of stock—William Fisher Hobbs, Esq., who resides at the Lodge; and his farm-yard and fields possess a living interest not to be found in the stately column or the cob-webbed ruin. The manor of Boxted Hall belongs to Mrs. Freeman, and Rivers Hall to the Rush family.† LANGHAM is a long parish, extending from the river-side to within three miles of Colchester, and

after his death his executors should purchase sufficient stock to yield £85 a year—£10 to be applied to schooling poor children, £10 for coals for the poor, and £15 for blankets and winter clothing; he also left the dividends of £500 to be distributed among the poor on St. Thomas's day. These charities were established by the Court of Chancery in 1836; and the £10 for education is applied to the National School.

\* Each of the Horkesleys has a share of Love's charity; and the poor of Great Horkesley have the rent of a farm of 30 acres at Elmsted, left by John Guyon in 1509.

† There are three almshouses for poor widows, left by Robert Gilder in 1668, and endowed with 2A. 9P. of land; the poor have an acre of land allotted on the enclosure of the heath, and a share of Love's charity; the rent of Camping Close, of 2A. 8R. 13P., is carried to the poor-rates.



has several hamlets or clusters of houses scattered over it. Lord Ashburton is lord of Langham Hall, a good mansion, which was greatly improved by John Hinde, Esq., in 1740. It stands on an eminence which commands fine views, especially towards Harwich. At the survey it was held by Walter Tyrell, the founder of the old Essex family, who came over with the Conqueror, and is known in history as the man who slew King Rufus. In the reign of Henry VIII. the lordship was held by two of his queens, Catharine of Arragon and Jane Seymour; and, being still in the crown, Charles I. sold it when pressed for money and unable to obtain it from a jealous and grudging parliament. The Lodge was formerly a park, which was broken up and converted into a farm.—The parish receives £2. a-year for the education of poor children from Dyke's charity at East Bergholt; and the poor have a share of Love's charity.

DEDHAM, the last parish in the north-east corner of the Hundred, lies upon the bank of the Stour, and in one of those pleasant and picturesque spots with which this part of the county abounds. The village contains some good houses, and may almost be called a town—a dignity which it enjoyed in old days, when, though perhaps not more populous than at present, it had its weekly market. It was a seat of the cloth manufacture in early ages, long before the flock of migratory Flemings alighted in the land, as we find that the Earl of Suffolk had a fulling mill here in 1382; and in 1410 a fulling mill is mentioned in a grant to the nuns of Campesse. The bay trade was also carried on largely here when it flourished at Colchester; but all traces of manufacture have now departed, and the village has sunk into rural quietude. The manor of Dedham Hall, which was frequently in the crown in different ages, and was granted to various parties, belongs to Wm. Hutton, Esq., and Nether Hall, long held by the De Dedham family and the nuns of Campsey, to the Smithies family. The church is a noble building in the perpendicular style, and may take rank among the finest parochial temples in the county. The tower rises to the height of 131 feet, with rich battlements and pinnacles, and the arch beneath adorned with the arms of York and Lancaster. The interior, however, contains no monuments of interest or antiquity.

Dedham can boast a fairly-endowed and well-conducted grammar school, erected by Dame Joan Clarke early in the sixteenth century, and endowed by William Littlebury in 1571 with Ragmarsh farm of 182A. 1R. 3P. in Bradfield and Wrabness, the rent of which he directed to be paid to a schoolmaster holding a university degree, to teach grammar and writing to twenty of the poorest men's children in Dedham, Ardleigh, Great Bromley and Bradfield, and Stratford in Suffolk; besides this, 2A. 2R. 38P. of land were allotted to the institution at the enclosure. The school was constituted by letters patent of Queen Elizabeth in 1579, the vicar and twenty-three others being incorporated as a body of governors. The number of free-scholars has now been increased to forty, who are admitted free of all charge for instruction, and the school is divided into two branches—one for Latin and Greek, and the other for writing, accounts, and the usual English education, the scholars in the latter being provided with copy-books and stationery. An English school was founded by Edmund Sherman in 1599, and endowed by John Marsh in 1642, with a rent-charge of £6 out of Dedham Hall; it has also 8A. 38P. of land called Purney Heath, and 1½A. allotted at the enclosure—this, being in the hands of the same trustees, is amalgamated with the grammar school, the master



teaching eight poor boys on this foundation as free scholars in reading, writing, and accounts. The pupils of the grammar school have the opportunity of exhibitions at the university. Wm. Cardinall, in 1595, left in trust to the governors a farm at Great Bromley, (to which 5A. have since been added, making 49A. 2R. 26P.) to apply the rent "towards the support of two poor boys of Dedham or Great Bromley, at St. John's College, Cambridge, who should be fit to go there from the said grammar school." There being no claim for this for some years the governors, under a discretionary clause in the will, paid the income over to the lecturer—a clergyman who, since the time of Elizabeth, has been appointed to preach in the church on Sunday afternoon and Tuesday. The Rev. W. Burkitt, the learned author of the "Commentary on the New Testament," who held this office from 1692 to 1703, left his house for the lecturer, who is also endowed with the great tithes, purchased of the impropriator for the purpose in 1704, and a small estate at Chattisham. The Rev. Dr. Taylor is the present lecturer.

There are ten almshouses, originally founded by Stephen Dunton, in 1517, and endowed with Row Meadow, of 2A. 2R. 19P. of land; in 1571, William Littlebury left an estate of 69A. 8P., called Brocks and Brewses, two-thirds of the rent to be given to the almspeople, and the remainder to aged and infirm poor. Four other almshouses were founded by Mary Barfield, of Colchester, for aged widows, and endowed with 4s. a week each and coals: the independent minister and others are trustees. The rent of Clacton-land, 27A. 1R. 8P., purchased with parish money in 1816, and of Crabb Meadow, 1A. 1R. 16P., derived from an unknown source, are applied to the repair and ornamentation of the church. The Town Stock (part of which has been lost) consists of £10., left by William Littlebury, in 1571; £40. left by Hugh May, in 1604; £40. by John Marsh, in 1642; and £32. by Robert Freeman and the Rev. Mr. Turner, about 1690, to be lent on good security, free of interest, for periods of seven years, to honest young men brought up in cloth making: this trade being extinct, the loans are made to small tradesmen and others. The Town Land, of 35A. 10P., and a cottage at Ardleigh, were left by John Chapman, in 1657, and the proceeds are given in coals and money to the poor, who have also the interest of £90. left by Grace Marratt, in 1825; and the dividends of £500. stock, left by Edward Betts, in 1825, are given to the poor attending the church in coals, bread, and blankets.

## Tendring Hundred.

This Hundred contains the following 28 parishes, irrespective of the Sokens, which form a peculiar jurisdiction :—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.		
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.	
Tendring .....	<i>Tendringa</i> , a Saxon chief .....	2827	953	£. 4317	£. 840	s. 0	d. 0
Alresford .....	<i>Aler</i> , alder, and a ford—the ford at the alders.....	1588	266	1923	356	0	0
Ardleigh .....	The British word <i>Arđ</i> —high, and <i>ley</i> , pasture .....	4905	1727	9306	1300	0	0
Beaumont .....	A fine hill .....	3261	505	3892	793	0	0
Great Bentley .....	<i>Bene</i> , the field of prayer .....	3188	1025	4970	670	0	0
Little Bentley .....	<i>Bene</i> , the field of prayer .....	2012	428	3288	670	0	0
Bradfield.....	<i>Brād</i> , broad; and field—broad-field .....	2719	994	3959	337	0	0
Brightlingsea...	<i>Brictric</i> , an owner; and an island or water .....	3560	1852	4500	240	0	0
Great Bromley .....	The Saxon words <i>brom</i> and <i>ley</i> , pasture; broom-pasture .....	2956	797	4365	858	0	0
Little Bromley .....	The Saxon words <i>brom</i> and <i>ley</i> , pasture; broom-pasture .....	1841	405	2984	560	0	0
Great Clacton .....	<i>Clay</i> , and <i>ton</i> , a town .....	4280	1281	7253	954	2	0
Little Clacton .....	<i>Clay</i> , and <i>ton</i> , a town .....	2966	615	4056			
Elmstead .....	<i>Elm</i> , and <i>stead</i> —Elm place .....	3644	908	4900			
Frating ... ..	<i>Frea</i> , a lord; and <i>ing</i> , a meadow—the lord's meadow ...	1287	247	2118	345	0	0
Frinton .....	<i>Frinting</i> —the front of the sea cliff.....	820	30	634	150	0	0
Great Holland .....	The Celtic word <i>kay</i> , and land—	2083	508	3285	777	16	0
Little Holland .....	Hayland .....	916	86	860			
Lawford .....		2679	890	5502	730	0	0
Manningtree .....	<i>Man</i> , little; and <i>tre</i> , a town.....	115	1176	2676			
Mistley .....	<i>Miscol</i> , a herb; and <i>ley</i> , a pasture .....	2115	516	6249	668	0	0
Great Oakley .....	Oak pasture .....	3049	1177	5097	900	0	0
Little Oakley .....	Oak pasture .....	1119	293	1744	415	0	0
St. Osyth.....	St. Osgith .....	9671	1696	11,724			
Ramsey .....	Ram's island .....	6693	657	5516	973	14	0
Thorington .....	The Saxon deity <i>Thor</i> , and <i>ing</i> , and <i>ton</i> —a meadow and town .....	1930	458	2423	484	0	0
Weeley .....	<i>Wig</i> , a battle; and <i>ley</i> , pasture—the scene of a remarkable battle.....	2087	617	3357	580	0	0
Wix .....	<i>Wic</i> , a village or farm .....	3090	778	4946	840	0	0
Wrabness .....	Ness is from the promontory ...	1491	261	1821	360	0	0

\* The value.

† Consolidated with the vicarage of Great Clacton.

‡ Value of the perpetual curacy.

§ Value of the donative.

|| The benefice is a perpetual curacy, value £150.

This is a pleasant and fertile district, forming a little peninsula, separated from Suffolk on the north by the estuary of the Stour, bounded on the east and south-east by the German Ocean, and washed on the south and the west by the waters of the Colne and its estuary, by which it is separated from Lexden Hundred and Colchester. It is nearly circular, being about 15 miles in length and 13 in breadth, with a tongue of land at its extreme point, jutting into the sea, and upon this stands the town of Harwich. To the southward a fine promontory extends about five miles, the sea forming within a bay of winding creeks, surrounding several small islands; and at the end of this headland rises Walton-on-the-Naze, the most pleasant and improving bathing-place along the coast. It might naturally be supposed that, being so close to the ancient Colonia, Tendring Hundred would have been the scene of Roman habitations and settlements; but except at a few points by the

sea, which they occupied for defensive purposes, no traces of this people are found. There is reason to believe that in their time Tendring was an uncultivated wilderness. It remained in its primitive wildness till the Saxon intruders penetrated into the bush, and began to clear it to form their settlements. By the Normans the Hundred was attached to Colchester castle, and through ages has gone with it, Charles Gray Round, Esq., the present owner of that old fortress, having the right of appointing a steward and the bailiff. Though disafforested by King Stephen, the land seems to have remained in a half-reclaimed state down to a recent period. At the beginning of the last century we find it described as "much covered with wood, and full of foul and bushy ground;" but drainage and modern enterprize have made it one of the best cultivated and most fertile districts of the county. Up to the establishment of the county courts actions for debts and other matters arising in the Hundred were tried at the court baron, which was held for that purpose every three weeks at Manningtree; but this remnant of ancient lordly government perished on the introduction of the new system.

If, on entering the Hundred from Colchester we pursue the course of the Colne, we pass on the inland side the village of **ELMSTED**—a town, as it was called in 1253, when Sir Richard De Tany (this being then part of the domains of that great family) obtained a license "to keep a market and a fair at his town of Elmsted." In later times a market was held here when the pestilence was stalking through the streets of Colchester, and the country folk dared not enter them with their cattle and their corn and other rural merchandize: a hamlet in the parish is still called Elmsted Market. E. Daniels, Esq., is lord of the manor, once held by Suene and other nobles of old note. If we step aside to the church, we shall find an interesting memorial of the ancient owners of the land—the wooden effigy of a cross-legged knight, supposed to be a Fitzwilliam or a De Tany, or a Templar of the Mandeville family, and considered to be the oldest of its kind in this county.\* Adjacent are the **BROMLEYS**. Of Great Bromley, over which the De Veres were paramount, Lord Ashburton is the manorial lord. In the last century the Hall was the residence of Lord Donnegall, but it is now a farm house. The church is a large and handsome edifice, with an elegant ornamented roof; and in the chancel are several fine monuments. The manor of Little Bromley was held by Queen Edeva, in Edward the Confessor's reign. The Hall, a neat dwelling, is the home of that veteran of the field, Carrington Nunn, Esq., who so long presided, as master of a well known pack, over the fox-hunters of this district.†

**WYVENHOE**—THE SEAT OF J. GURDON-REBOW, Esq.—On the bank of the Colne, seated on a picturesque declivity, is the large and goodly village of Wyvenhoe, which rightfully belongs by its position to this Hundred, but custom has long attached it to that of Lexden. In maritime matters it is a member of the Cinque Port of Sandwich, and is within the jurisdiction of the Colchester custom-house. Most of the inhabitants are employed in boat-building, fishing, and oyster-

\* The poor charities consist of a house, formerly used as a workhouse, and three cottages, with gardens.

† The inhabitants of Great Bromley have a play-ground of four acres allotted on the enclosure of Bromley Thicks.—The Sunday-school of Little Bromley has the dividends of £100. stock from Crossman's charity. In 1809, Elizabeth Warner gave the dividends of £210. stock, to provide coats and gowns for poor men and women.

dredging; and it is here that many of the larger vessels stop and discharge their cargoes, which are sent further up the river by lighters. Clustering upon the boundary of the ancient borough of Colchester, with which its owners have for more than two hundred years been connected, (and lying, in fact, partly within its borders, in the parish of Greenstead,) is Wyvenhoe Park, the large and handsome seat of J. Gurdon-Rebow, Esq., who has just been unanimously elected High Steward. This gentleman represents the arms and honours of three wealthy families—the Gurdons, the Martins, and the Rebows,—the two latter having been long connected by property and public duties with this locality. The estate was anciently in the Beriff family, but we find little account of it till it came, in the course of the last century, into the possession of Isaac Martin-Rebow, Esq., who laid out the park, rebuilt the mansion, about 1740, and gave it rank amongst the elegant homes of the Essex gentry. Long prior to this the family of Rebow had been honourably connected with the borough of Colchester. John Rebow, Esq., whose ancestors came from the Low Countries, and amassed a fortune in mercantile pursuits, had a royal grant of arms in 1685. His son, Sir Isaac Rebow, who was knighted by William III., whom he several times entertained at his house in Head-street, became high steward, recorder, and member for the borough; and his memory is still perpetuated in the town by the title of Sir Isaac's Walk given to one of its streets. His successor, Isaac Leming Rebow, Esq., of Colchester, married the daughter of Captain Matthew Martin, of Wyvenhoe and Alresford Hall, member for the borough. Isaac Martin-Rebow, Esq., colonel of the East Essex Militia, recorder and member for Colchester, married his cousin, Mary Martin, a co-heiress, who brought the Martin estates into the family, and her husband assumed the name. Their daughter married General Francis Slater, who took the name of Rebow. From this union sprang another heiress, married first to Sir Thomas Ormsby, Bart., who died in 1833, and secondly to John Gurdon, Esq., who assumed the name of Rebow, and succeeded to the estates in 1845. This lady died in 1842, and Mr. Gurdon-Rebow married, in 1845, Lady Georgiana Toler, daughter of the Earl of Norbury, and sister of the present Lady Braybrooke. The present owner of Wyvenhoe Park belongs to the ancient family of the Gurdons, of Assington, Suffolk, of Letton, Norfolk, and is the second brother of Brampton Gurdon, Esq., present M.P. for West Norfolk. The family originally came in with the Conqueror, and is found of knightly rank in the reign of Henry III.—the armorial ensigns of Sir Adam Gurdon, who flourished at that period, being still borne by the family. Nor is it a name altogether unknown in the records of Essex. We find a Gurdon commanding a regiment of horse at the siege of Colchester, and signing the articles of capitulation as one of the commissioners of Fairfax. Three generations of the Gurdons resided at Dedham, in the fifteenth century. Brampton Gurdon, Esq., of Assington Hall, who was high sheriff of Suffolk in 1625, several times represented Sudbury in parliament; and the family by intermarriages became connected with the Barretts, of Bell-house, the Mildmayes, and the Harveys. Dr. Gurdon, who died in 1695, was rector of Chelmsford, and one of his daughters married to Sir John Comyns, of Hylands, the Chief Baron of the Exchequer. The family of Martin, which, as we have seen, has been absorbed into

that of Rebow, was of considerable influence in the district, and Captain Matthew Martin has an honourable place in the naval records of the country. From the history of the exploit which rendered him one of the heroes of his time, as given in "Naval Anecdotes," it appears that the captain was in command of the *Marlborough* Indiaman, of 32 guns, with a cargo valued at £200,000, having £100,000. in foreign specie, when he was attacked by three French ships of war, of 70, 60, and 32 guns, which had been lying in wait for him. A sharp fight ensued, and he continued to baulk and baffle them for three days, by his skilful manœuvres and nautical stratagems. Towards the close of the third day the enemy were close upon him and made sure of their prey, on which he resorted to the following ingenious stratagem:—

"As soon as it was dark he ordered a light to be placed in the great cabin window, and no other light to appear in the ship. He then ordered a water cask to be sawn in halves, in one of which he fixed a mast, with a light on the top of it, exactly the height of the light in the window, turned the cask adrift, and at the same moment put out the light in the ship. The French followed the barrel, soon came up with it, and believing it was his ship, and that he meant to fight, prepared for action; but before all was ready the cask sunk, leaving them in perplexity how to proceed. Captain Martin continued his course, and in a short time arrived safe in the port of Fort St. George, to which he was bound."

For this he had a grant of arms in 1722, a reward of £1,000., and a gold medal set round with twenty-four large diamonds.

The present mansion of Wyvenhoe Park, which is of red brick with stone dressings, was, as we have said, originally built by Colonel Isaac Martin-Rebow, 120 years since. Subsequently it was enlarged and improved by General Slater-Rebow; and in 1847-8 it was further altered and extended by the present proprietor, who imparted to it a complete Elizabethan character. It stands in the midst of one of those fine old deer parks which have been justly described as the pride and ornament of our land, whose venerable and whitened trees represent the stability of the old families whose homes they surround, and who, like them, spread out their branches to afford support and shelter to the surrounding districts. And though Wyvenhoe Park is not connected with olden tales of feudal struggle, it is intimately linked with the records of our modern chivalry, as represented by the military reviews for which it has been freely thrown open. Here, it is still fresh in recollection, the Prince Consort reviewed the troops from the camp at the close of the Crimean war; here subsequently was held a grand field-day of the German Legion, when a royal duke partook of the hospitality of the mansion; and yonder, within the precincts of the domain, are the target and butt of the neighbouring volunteers, who, thus furnished with an excellent range, and by other acts of patriotic liberality, are encouraged to meet and practice arms within the park, to secure old Colchester from a repetition of the degradation it suffered in 1216, by seeing upon its walls the flag of the foeman and the stranger.

The domain is on a pleasant eminence about two miles and a half east of Colchester, and abuts upon the high road. The park, which contains 250 acres, is entered from two lodge gates from the Colchester and Wyvenhoe side, and affords fine picturesque and diversified views of hill and vale and woodland scenery, with prospects of Colchester and the surrounding country. From the principal entrance is a carriage drive, which in its gradual descent past a lake on the left, brings the house into view through an opening in a row of tall and venerable trees

fringing the margin of a broad sheet of water on the northern side. This park, which has a fine herd of deer, is richly clothed with timber; and its forestal aspect and undulations towards the western valley, contrasting with the smooth and open lawn-like lands on the south, present a pleasant rural picture. We turn now to the mansion, which has its principal front to the north, and reach by a flight of stone steps the large and handsome entrance hall. As the eye wanders over the works of art, and the chaste ornamental ceiling, it rests upon the noble chimney-piece, which has in its centre the arms of Rebow, Gurdon, Toler, and Brabazon quartered; it is surmounted by some fine specimens of old wood carving, and representations of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Leicester support the sides. There are several fine busts in this apartment—one of them an excellent likeness of Mr. Rebow, in Carrara marble, from the hand of Gibson; and the others were copied by Theed from the original statues, for the purpose of being placed here, in 1848. To the left of the entrance hall is the suite of private apartments; and passing to the stair-case hall, access is obtained to the different parts of the mansion. To the right, and looking out on the park and grounds on the westward, is the library, with its shelves richly stocked, and the works well classified. But the attention is quickly drawn from the learned tome and the tasteful fitting-up of the apartment, to the finest piece of wood carving to be found in the county—the greatest work of Grinling Gibbons in this style, representing the “Stoning of St. Stephen.” It is remarkable for the expression of feeling in some of the figures, of which there are seventy—for the beauty of the architectural design and carving, and the correctness of perspective. It is carved out of three blocks of lance-wood. The history of the exquisite work is this: Grinling Gibbons was patronized by the beneficent and curious Mr. Evelyn, and was by him recommended to Charles II. The king bought of him this carving, and presented it to the Duke of Chandos. By him it was placed at Cannons, in Hertfordshire. On the demolition of Cannons (early in the last century) it was bought by John Gore, Esq., M.P., and removed to his country seat at Bush Hill Park, near Enfield. There it remained till the death of his grandson and co-heir, the late William Mellish, Esq., M.P. for Middlesex, at whose decease, in 1839, it came into the possession of his nephew and co-heir, J. Gurdon Rebow, Esq., by whom it was removed to Wyvenhoe Park. In the splendid drawing room on the south, with its highly ornamented walls and ceiling, is a cabinet of curiosities and family relics—amongst them a bronze lamp and cup from Pompeii, gold christening cups, and the enamelled record of the exploit of Captain Martin. Amongst the paintings in this apartment are “King Charles on horseback,” by Van-dyke; “Moll Davis,” by Sir Peter Lely; and a fine full-length, considered an excellent likeness of Lady Georgiana Rebow, painted by Hauser, at Naples, in 1848. The dining-room, from which there is a view of the pleasure-grounds, and landscape gardens, laid out by Nesfield, is enriched with portraits of the Earls of Norbury, including that of the celebrated Chief Justice. The chimney-piece in this apartment is finely carved; and the side board of elaborate beauty it is impossible for the visitor to pass unheeded. It is formed out of one block of walnut: around it is carved work modelled from the frieze of the iron gates of the Baptistery at Florence; six lions, copied from the Elgin marbles, support it; and from the clustering vines and vine leaves at the back, an eagle is rising in the centre from



a mural coronet, holding in its mouth an arrow, the crest of Rebow. In the gallery are lines of family portraits, amongst which are those of Captain Martin, Sir Isaac Rebow, and various others who have owned, lived at, and passed away from, the fine old seat of Wyvenhoe.

Attached to the mansion are fine kitchen gardens, celebrated for the growth of strawberries.

Wyvenhoe Hall, a fine old mansion, on the north-west of the village, was formerly a seat of the De Veres, when it had a noble tower gateway, which was used as a sea mark; but this has now been demolished. It is the residence of Sir Claude de Crespigny, the Colonel Commandant of the Essex Rifle Volunteers, but is the property of the Corsellis family, the lords of the manor. Most of the lands, however, are freehold. Wyvenhoe House, too, was a good residence, and the brother of the celebrated Beau Brummell resided there; but it is now in course of demolition. The church, which was an ancient Gothic structure, has just been restored and enlarged in the same style, principally through the liberality of Mr. Rebow and others in the neighbourhood.

The charities of the parish are five acres of land purchased with £50 left by Jonathan Feedham, in 1717, the proceeds to be given to poor sailors or their widows; a rent-charge of £2. out of a garden left by — Cox in 1744, for poor widows; and a rent-charge of £2. 10s. out of a farm at Fingringhoe, left by William Sanford in 1829, to be given to ten poor widows attending the church. Another rent-charge of £2. 10s. for the like purpose, left by the Rev. T. Goodwin in 1743, has been lost.

We next pass FRATING, with its small village, and some good farm-houses. The manor of the Hall belongs to Caius College, Cambridge, to which it was given by Dr. Pierce, about 1611.\* Turning further inland, we enter the BENTLEYS, Great and Little. The Hall of the latter was formerly the chief residence of the Pyrton family, and afterwards of the wealthy Baynings, who erected a magnificent mansion here. This was pulled down by the Earl of Oxford, who afterwards became possessed of the estate, and much of the stately material was purchased to adorn the homes of the Colchester burgesses. Mrs. E. Bond is lady of the manor. Great Bentley is a large village, with its houses spreading pleasantly round a green, and presenting, when touched with the hues of imagination, and dressed in the freshness of spring, one of those rural pictures which dreamy poets love to paint, and, forgetful of cottage vices, poverty, and pauperism, people with a race steeped in rustic innocence. Near the church was another noble seat of the De Veres, standing in a large park. This is also demolished; but its site is still called the Hall Field, and slight traces of the moat remain. W. W. Francis, Esq., is lord of the manor; but the Lodge belongs to Lord Ashburton, and Great and Little Catlins to Caius and Gonville College, Cambridge. Beyond these parishes is WEELEY, a neat village on the high ground, above a rivulet. By a singular coincidence, William Weeley, Esq., is lord of the manor, though the family had no connexion with it till 1639, when it was purchased by William Weeley, ages after its name had been established; and it has ever since continued in that family. This was a place of some importance at the early part of the present century, when large barracks stood

\* The poor have a house given by an unknown donor, and several garden plots enclosed from the waste.

here and were constantly filled with troops, ready either to embark for the continent or to defend the coast. When peace dawned upon the land in 1815, this military station was abolished and the buildings pulled down. An attempt to establish a cattle-market here in 1844 failed; in 1847 its fine old hall, which stood on the eminence near the church, and commanded beautiful views to sea-ward and in other directions, was pulled down; and the place has sunk into the quietude of an ordinary country village.—The National School was endowed in 1824 by the widow of Archdeacon Jefferson, with £9. 4s. out of the rectory.

ALRESFORD lies next in our path, on the lofty table-land above the vale of the Colne, with its neat ancient village, its hall, and its little church—the latter built, it is believed, about 550 years ago, by Aufred De Staunton, the owner of the parish at that period, and of whom the visitor will find an epitaph in old Norman French as he paces the chancel. The sacred edifice, however, was judiciously repaired and freshly adorned about twelve years ago, when the south aisle was added by W. W. Hawkins, Esq., who has also erected a good national school. The Hall is the seat of this gentleman, who is leaseholder of the manor. It is a handsome mansion, standing on a richly-wooded eminence, south-east of the church, in a fine undulatory park, parts of which command beautiful views of the Colne and the country in that direction. At the survey, this estate had been wrested from its Saxon owners, and given to the Earl of Boulogne; and in 1311 it was held of the king *in capite*, “by the fourth part of a knight’s fee, a race of ginger, a stalk of clove-gilly-flower, and suit at the court of Boulogne.” It afterwards passed to Aufred De Staunton, Sir John De Coggeshall, and others; and in the early part of the seventeenth century it was purchased by John Hawkins, of Braintree, clothier. His granddaughter carried it in marriage to Sir John Dawes, of Bocking, Bart.; and after passing through other families, the Hall and a large part of the land has come back to the Hawkins family.—The only poor charity is a rent-charge of 2s. 8d. out of Pointer Farm, left by Edmund Porter, in 1558.

BRIGHTLINGSHA, an important fishing village, lies below, on the right, on the east side of the estuary of the Colne, along whose bank the parish extends for about three miles. It forms a sort of little peninsula, encompassed by the river on one side and by navigable creeks on the north and south, so that at high water it is approachable only by the road at the north-east angle. Indeed, it has been thought that this was the island in which the Danes took refuge from the pursuit of King Alfred. It was part of the possessions of Harold; and consequently coming to the crown, passed as part of the spoil of the Conquest to Eudo Dapifer, the great patron of Colchester, who gave the manor to St. John’s Abbey. At the dissolution, Henry VIII. granted it to Lord Cromwell; it reverted to the crown on his attainder; and after being in the Henage and Colt families, was purchased in 1763 by Nicholas Magens, Esq., a wealthy merchant, in whose representatives it still continues, Dorien Magens, Esq., of Sussex, being the present lord, and owner of most of the soil. The parish belongs to the cinque port of Sandwich, in Kent, and possessed various peculiar privileges, such as its property being exempt from county rates, and its inhabitants from serving in the militia and on juries. Up to 1804 a deputy-mayor was elected for the parish; but the business is now done by the agent of this cinque port at Wyvenhoe. The port is of growing importance

and considerable activity. It has been long famed for its oyster trade, about 300 of its hardy seafaring sons being licensed to dredge in the waters belonging to the Colchester corporation; and about 200 vessels, of from 15 to 40 tons, hailing from Brightlingsea, are engaged in this and other branches of the fishing business. The population has nearly trebled within the last 50 years. The mother church is a good fabric, standing some distance from the village, on an elevated spot, where its tower, rising to the height of 94 feet, forms a welcome landmark to the weary mariner as his sail speeds homeward in the cold wintry breeze. In the chancel of the sacred building is, perhaps, the most costly tomb in the county—the expense of its erection, it is stated, amounting to £6,000.—over Nicholas Magens, Esq., the purchaser of the Hall in the last century; and certainly art has done its best to render beautiful the pile of wealth thus heaped above the naked poverty of the grave.—In the village there is a small chapel-of-ease, dedicated to St. James. There is a school in the parish for the education of 16 boys, endowed by a late vicar and the lord of the manor with £12. a year; and there is a charity of 52s. a year for the poor, left by the Rev. John Sympson, out of lands in Kirby.

ST. OSYTH.—THE PRIORY.—A little to the northward we pass THORRINGTON, of which the manorial rights, with part of the soil, have belonged to St. John's College, Cambridge, since 1521, when they were given to that learned body by the Countess of Richmond, the foundress. We then enter St. Osyth, a large village, eleven miles from Colchester, standing on the acclivities of a brook, which falls, close by, into a creek, navigable for vessels of considerable burthen. The parish is one of the largest in the county, extending down to the ocean at the mouth of the Colne, where there are a fort and martello towers. In this locality was one of those monastic institutions which studded the land; and we find it, not a heap of ruins, overrun with the bramble and wreathed in cobwebs, like most others in the county which have a trace left above-ground; but there is life within its walls—a bright fire still blazing upon the Priory hearth-stone. This, however, was not the religious house that gave name to the parish. For this we must go back to the days of the infant christianity of the land—even to the times of the Saxon heptarchy. The legend is, that the Lady Osgyth, or Osyth, the daughter of one of these sovereigns, brought up in the Chiltern Hills, near Aylesbury, had made a vow of virginity, but was compelled by her father to marry Sighere, King of Essex, a convert to the faith. The young bride, however, tricked her new lord. On the nuptial day she took advantage of his temporary absence, and placed on her head the vestal veil, the sign and seal of her settled determination, which it seems he respected, and gave her this parish in which to carry out her religious vows. Here she built a church, and founded a nunnery of the order of the Holy Trinity. On this spot, says the legend, she reached the dignity of martyrdom. In one of the wild incursions of the Danes, under Ingvar and Hubba, her monastery was laid waste, and she herself was dragged to a fountain near by, at which she had been accustomed to wash with her veiled virgins, and beheaded. Her body was first buried before the door of her church, but was exhumed and taken to Aylesbury for fear of the Danes. It was afterwards brought back; and wondrous tales of miracles wrought by her means brought crowds of pilgrims to the shrine of the virgin wife, and obtained enrolment for her name in the catalogue of Saxon saints. The Danish King, Canute, after he became

master of the country, gave the parish to Earl Godwin; and at the survey the greater part of it was found in the see of London. Bishop de Belmeis, about 1118, founded the priory upon the site on which the nunnery had stood 400 years before, for Augustine canons, and it became one of the richest and most powerful in the land. Its possessions extended widely over the county. Besides the greater part of this large parish, it had about 40 manors, various parcels of land, the tithes and advowsons in 14 parishes, with alternate presentations and part of the tithes in others; a chapel in Moulsham and another at Brentwood—property ample for one of our nobles at the present day. At the suppression there was an abbot, a priest, and 18 canons in the house; and when the surrender was signed on the 28th of July, 1539, the revenues amounted to £677. 7s. 2d. The Lord Chancellor Audley, though gorged with monastic spoils, cast a longing eye upon the fair possession. His rapacity, like love, "gained appetite from what it fed on," and he was peculiarly anxious to obtain the priory and the neighbouring abbey of St. John's, because they would give him greater consequence in his native place of Colchester. Some of his letters to the Lord Cromwell upon the subject, which have been preserved in the Cottonian collection, contain a sad illustration of the meanness of a great mind. He stoops to misrepresentation; pleads poverty; and even proffers a bribe for the support of his application to the king. In one of them he says—

"Your Lordship knoweth that fyrst havyng the howse and park at Seynt Oyses, by his Grace's owen assignment duryng his Highnes' plesure, and after the house of Seynt John's, and the lands nere adjoynng, by your meanes apoynted to me by his Highnes, and now to forgo al this shal be no litell losse to my pore honeste and estymacion, considering this to be in the contree where I was borne and most part brow't up, and also there ly nere my pore howse and lands that I fyrst bylded and bowt."

Again, in other letters, he says—

"Plese it your good Lordshipp to remember my sute. Ffyrst towchynge the translation of Seynt Oyses and Seynt John's in to secular Priests, accordyng to such ordynances as shal please the Kyng's Majeste, and his Grace shal have of every of the said howses for the same oon Mli. As for Seynt Oyses, all though it be a great house in byldyng, I assure you it ys onholsum for dwellyng, by cause it ys nere the sea and marshes. This house also stondyth in the confyne of the realme nere the sees, and a howse keepyng gret hospitalyte for the releefe of dyvers smal townes about it. The steple also ys a comon marke for maryners upon the sees. And as I suppose, if it were suppressed, fewe of eny estimation wilbe content contynually to dwel there and kepe hospitalyte. All the possessions go under Vicli certyfyed. Your Lordshipp knoweth this house as well as I."

"I send to you a true Copy of the value of the goods of St. Oyses, and of the particularitez thereof, delyvered to me by Myldmay, the auditor, oon of the comysioners, wherby your Lordshipp may perceyve the contents of al the same goods, with the estimate of leade and bells. I was not at the dissolucyon of the howse, nor have eny penyworth of the goods, but I thynke the comysioners have servyd the Kyng's Majeste both honestely and truly. The comysioners were, Sir John Sayntcler, Sir William Pirton, Myldmay and Jobson whiche be ii of the Court of the Augmentacion, and a Master in Chauncery with them to take the surrender. In dede, I sent for the abbet afore the dissolucyon, and inducyd hym to yelde the howse to the Kynge's Majeste with hys good wyll, and that he shuld exort his convent to conforme them to the same, who by my advise and exortation conformed themselves as humble subgetts, without murmour or grugge. Wherein I trust I have not for my part servyd the Kynge's Highnes amysse."

Cromwell, however, whom Audley was endeavouring to engage as an intercessor, secured the property for himself. On his attainder it reverted to the crown; and Edward VI. sold the priory, and great part of the manors and endowments, to Lord Darcy, the chamberlain of his household, for £3,974. 9s. 4½d. This nobleman pulled down part

of the buildings and converted the remainder into his country seat. One of the Darcy's, in 1626, obtained the title of Earl Rivers, which was carried into the family of Savage by marriage; and the last of this line was the nobleman connected with the extraordinary story, over which decency draws a veil, of the criminality and cruelty of the Countess of Macclesfield, and the birth and treatment of Savage, the poet. As he died without legitimate male issue, he gave his estates to Bessy, his natural daughter, who married Frederick Zulestein de Nassau, Earl of Rochford, a descendant of a natural son of the Prince of Orange; and it was to this lady, who appears to have often befriended the reckless poet, that Savage—according to the story referred to, a natural son of the same father—addressed the poem in which he touchingly says—

“Hail Rivers! hallow'd shade, descend from rest!  
 Descend and smile to see thy Rochford blest:  
 Weep not the scenes through which my life must run,  
 Though fate, fleet-footed, scents thy languid son.  
 The bar that, darkening, crossed my crested claim,  
 Yields at her charms, and brightens in their flame;  
 That blood which honour'd in thy Rochford reigns,  
 In cold, unwilling wanderings trac'd my veins.  
 Want's wintry realm froze hard around my view,  
 And scorn's keen blasts a cutting anguish blew,  
 To such sad weight my gathering griefs were wrought,  
 Life seemed not life, but when convulsed with thought;  
 Decreed beneath a mother's frown to pine,  
 Madness were ease, to misery form'd like mine.”

In consequence of this marriage the estates were settled by act of parliament in 1721. The fourth Earl of Rochford died without issue in 1781, and the property came to the Nassau's. The priory is now the seat of J. R. Kirby, Esq., who married one of the heiresses of the late W. F. Nassau, Esq.; another was united to William Brandreth, Esq., who is lord of the manor, and resides in a new house about a mile distant.

The Priory, as to its situation, by no means justifies the deprecatory terms in which Lord Chancellor Audley spoke of it. It stands in a park of about 300 acres, on a delightful spot, commanding fine views over the country and to seaward, especially from three towers on the eastern side and an observatory which rises above the sharp pointed gables of a range of ancient Tudor buildings which occupy one side of the quadrangle. There are apartments in each story of this lofty look-out, but they have been long disused. The vast pile has undergone various alterations at different periods. The north side may be called the modern mansion, built of red brick with stone dressings; but the principal entrance is by a grand tower gateway on the south, the front of which is adorned with rich tracery, niches, and other ornaments, and flanked by two lofty embattled towers of flint and hewn stone. These contain spacious apartments, formerly used for balls and baronial festivities. A glance at this gateway alone is worth a pilgrimage to St. Osyth by those who desire to obtain an idea of the olden magnificence of the place in the time of the priors and the coroneted families which have since made it their home. The present proprietor is doing much towards the restoration of the mansion.

The church, dedicated to St. Osyth and St. Peter and St. Paul, stands on the south side of the park, and is a fine building. Bishop Belmeis was buried here, and Weever gives his epitaph, since obliterated, of which the following is a translation:—



"Here lieth Richard Beauveyes, surnamed Rufus, Bishop of London, a man of probity and far advanced in years, diligent throughout life, our religious founder, and one that conferred much good on us, and the ministers of the church of St. Paul; he died 16th January, 1127, on whose soul the Highest have mercy."

There are in the chancel several battered and defaced monuments of the Lords Darcy.

The charities of the parish are a rent-charge of £2. 12s. for six poor widows, out of land in St. Clere's farm; and five acres of land and seven tenements given by donors now unknown.

Farther down the coast, with the German Ocean opening upon us on the right, are GREAT and LITTLE CLACTON, which formed one parish at the time of the survey.\* GREAT and LITTLE HOLLAND adjoin; the manor of the former belonging to Samuel Dennis, Esq.; of the latter to Robert Hills, Esq.; and beyond them is the little parish of FRINTON, which has been reduced to its present diminutive state by the encroachment of the waves. Its village disappeared beneath their attacks two centuries ago; of its church upon the cliffs a storm in 1703 left only a wreck of the west end, with accommodation for about a dozen worshippers; and the site of the Hall is now some half a mile out at sea.—Robert Hills, Esq., owns part of the lands.

Skirting the parishes forming the Sokens—Walton, Kirby, and Thorpe—which form a peculiar jurisdiction and have a history of their own, to be treated of separately—we reach TENDRING, which gives name to the Hundred, and lies about its centre. It is a fine large parish, with a straggling village, and the union-house of the district, but presents little either in its present aspect or olden history to detain us. John Cardinall, Esq., is lord, and resides at the manor house, a good mansion with pleasure-grounds well laid out and finely wooded; and the Hall, a tasteful modern mansion in the Swiss style, is the seat of Robert Hardy, Esq. Turning coastward after rounding the Sokens, we find BEAUMONT-CUM-MOSE on an eminence at the head of Hainford Water, a navigable creek, and including two small islands on the shore. Anciently this was two parishes, but they were consolidated in 1678; and since then Mose church has lain a ruin. Beaumont Hall, in the Elizabethan style, standing on an eminence commanding a fine view of the ocean, belongs to Guy's Hospital, together with the manor, having been purchased by that body of the Earl of Guildford in the last century. Still keeping our pathway along the coast, we pass the OAKLEYS, Great and Little, the first of which has a good village. The Hall is a large brick mansion, commanding good views of the sea, and is the seat of George Bull, Esq., the lord of the manor. The farms of Skigghaws, Stone Hall, and Dengwell Hall belong to Guy's Hospital. Little Oakley rises boldly from the shore, and along the north-west boundary of it runs a small creek from Harwich harbour. Sir J. R. Rowley is lord of the manor. The church is an ancient and interesting structure, and was well restored some years ago by the exertions and liberality of the Rev. G. Burmester, the patron and incumbent, and friends whom his efforts brought to his aid. RAMSEY, the next parish, skirts the boundary of the borough of Harwich, extending from the ocean to the estuary of the Stour.

\* There are almshouses in Great Clacton, founded by James Maskell, in 1827, for three inmates, who have 2s. 6d. and a loaf weekly. The poor have a rent-charge of £4., purchased with money left by H. Rainsford, in 1738, and the dividend of £50. stock, left by an unknown donor.—In Little Clacton the poor have the rent of 22 acres of land, purchased with money left by William Hubbard, in 1596.



It has a neat village and many good houses scattered among its lands. Anciently the parish formed part of the possessions of the Fitzwalters and of the Earls of Oxford; but it was long since broken up into a number of smaller manors. The old manor-house of Stour Hall is a large and handsome mansion, occupied by James Barker, Esq., who is the lord; and the Garland family own Michaelstow Hall, an estate to which 1,500 acres were added about 50 years ago by embankments in the estuary of the Stour. The church is an ancient Gothic building; and in the hamlet or manor of Foulton was formerly a chapel at which the vicar was obliged to officiate, but the lands with which it was endowed were swept away on the dissolution of chantries, and the building was demolished centuries ago.

**WIX NUNNERY.**—In completing our circuit of the Hundred, we pursue the road from Harwich towards Colchester, by the verge of the Stour, and pass WRABNESS, a pleasant parish by the river side, which anciently belonged to the abbey of Bury, but now owns E. M. Garland, Esq., as its manorial lord.\* The rural inland parish of Wix lies on our left. It is divided into two small villages, called Wix Cross and Wix Green. Eight hundred years ago, the manor, which now belongs to E. W. Garland, Esq., was in the hands of Edeva, the queen of Edward the Confessor; after the Conquest we find it in the hands of Walter the Deacon, who contrived to secure a good slice of the lands of the county; and his sons—the ancestors of the great family of Hastings—founded a nunnery here in the reign of Henry I., dedicated to the Virgin Mary. They endowed it with two caracutes of land, seven villanes, the church, a garden, and the third of the vil, besides property elsewhere. The endowment was augmented by Henry II., who granted the prioress and her nuns large privileges and exemptions; and by subsequent donations they acquired lands or tithes in Purleigh, Tendring, Mistley, Great Oakley, Fordham, and Benham, besides other property in Suffolk. Little is known of the history of the nunnery during the 400 years of its existence. The sisterhood appear to have flourished within their quiet walls, and sung their vesper hymns, prayed, and passed away with other institutions at the Reformation, when their yearly income was £92. 12s. 3d. This is a small sum even for the decent maintenance of one person in our day; but it must be remembered that the prioress in her time was able—unless in times of scarcity—to buy a quarter of wheat for 2s. : a fat ox for 6s. 8d. ; a fat goose for 2d. ; a pig for 1d. ; a gallon of wine for 6d. ; while the bailiff who superintended the cultivation of her lands paid only 1d. for a new plough; 1s. 2d. for a dung cart and all that belonged to it; and paid the reapers in the first week of harvest only 2d. a day. This religious house did not fall under the blow of the Eighth Henry; it was suppressed by the Pope's bull obtained by Wolsey, and its revenue was intended for his contemplated colleges; but after his fall the property was granted away by the crown. The nunnery stood on what is still called the Abbey Farm, in a field not far from the church, where the ponds which furnished the fish on fast days may yet be traced. The nuns, being the possessors of the church living, appropriated, after the fashion of their order, all the tithes to their own use, and gave a priest £6 13s. 4d. a-year to perform divine service. After the Reformation, no one being found to do duty for this miserable stipend, the disused church became

\* The poor have a rent-charge of 6s. 8d. from an unknown donor.

ruinous, and at last fell down. In 1740 the aisle was raised from its ruin, fitted up, and formed into the present church; but the perpetual curacy even now is worth only £150., although the tithes have been commuted at £840.—a sad comment on the way in which these matters were managed at the Reformation.—The only charitable endowment in the parish is £5. a-year out of Clay's Farm, left by Robert Clarke, in 1731, for teaching seven poor children; and this is paid to the mistress of the national school.

BRADFELD adjoins Wix, and has a good village near the high road, on the pleasant acclivity above the estuary and marsh-lands of the Stour. The Hall, now occupied by a farmer, was formerly a large mansion, the seat of the Grimstons and of Sir Harbottle Grimston, who, as already seen, took a leading part in the proceedings of the Commonwealth and the parliament of the Restoration. There is a cottage for the poor, and three rods of land given by an unknown donor.

MANNINGTREE, though it has a customary market for corn and cattle on Thursdays, comprises but about 20 acres, and is only a hamlet of MISTLEY, which forms, in fact, its eastern suburb, while Lawford constitutes the western. With their fine port and extensive quays they form, combined, a place of considerable business; the Stour, on whose southern bank they stand, being accessible for vessels of 250 tons up to this point, and navigable 20 miles further, up to Sudbury. It is at this spot that the river begins to expand into a broad estuary: and it has been truly said that on the first break of morning,

“When the waking sunbeams fringe  
With gold the trembling waters,”

and we turn our gaze up the Stour, with the cliffs on the right wooded to their summit, busy life awakening all along the spacious quays, where many of the 500 vessels which belong to the port are beginning to move and preparing to give out their canvas wings to the breeze, the scene is altogether the most picturesque to be found along this part of the coast—though abounding, as it does, with views of maritime life and rural beauty. At the Domesday survey, Manningtree and a part of Mistley, was held by Adeliza, the half-sister of the Conqueror, but subsequently went to an Augustine nunnery in Devonshire, and the other manor of Mistley belonged to the Priory of St. Osyth. After the Reformation the property was granted away, and about 1680 it was purchased by Edward Rigby, Esq., whose son built Mistley Hall. The mansion was enlarged and adorned, and made one of the ornaments of this part of the county, by the Right Hon. Richard Rigby, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, and joint paymaster of the forces. The pretty little hamlet, too, known as Mistley Thorn, was the creation of this gentleman. He erected 50 good dwellings there, made a quay, built granaries and warehouses, and also a handsome church in place of the old one, which lay in ruins about a mile to the south-eastward. The Rigby's were succeeded by the Earls Rivers, who partially deserted the place; and the Hall, which stood on an eminence about half a mile above the Stour, and was surrounded by a park of 700 acres, extensive gardens and plantations, was pulled down in 1845, the materials sold, and the property lotted out to the highest bidders. This was regarded at the time as a misfortune for the neighbourhood. It has been found, however, that ever since the place has been growing in business and importance. The land thus set free gave greater scope to industry—

allowed commerce more elbow-room for its efforts. Dwellings, wharves, warehouses, maltings and mills have been built, and the population has largely increased—so much does the robust trade of the present day depend upon itself, and so little upon the protecting shadow of even a lordly dwelling. Various good country seats, however, adorn the pleasant neighbourhood—Mistley Place, occupied by E. Norman, Esq.; the New Hall, by Robert Page, Esq.; Lawford Hall, a large mansion standing in a fine park, the home of Mrs. Greene, the lady of the ancient manor, which was part of the possessions of Harold before the Conquest, and has been held by the Bouchier, Waldegrave, and other families; and Lawford House, the elegant residence of Thomas Nunn, Esq. The chapel at Manningtree, in which is a monument to Thomas Ormond, one of the martyrs of the time of Queen Mary, was built about 1616, out of the ruins of the old one, which stood on the rising ground near the site of the present, and it was considerably enlarged some years ago. The curacy was consolidated with Mistley up to 1840, but in that year it was constituted a separate benefice. Anciently there was a guild here called Trinity Guild, with an income of £8. 5s. 4d., which passed into lay hands. The church of Lawford is an ancient structure. It has undergone many changes; but the walls are still ornamented with various elaborate old stone carvings.

The only charity in Manningtree is a house occupied by poor people—formerly the workhouse—believed to have been given by — Smith, about 1680. Richard Rigby, Esq., who died in 1732, directed by his will the establishment of six almshouses, the inmates to have six chaldrons of coals, 24 bushels of wheat, and 24 bushels of barley or malt out of the profits of the wharf; but the charity was not carried out, and since the inquiry of the Charity Commissioners a decree of the Court of Chancery has directed the value of the coals, wheat, and barley to be distributed amongst six poor parishioners.—In Lawford the sexton has a house given by Mr. Pecksale; and in 1723 John Leach left a house, barn, and 22 acres of land, a garden, and 12 acres of land now forming part of the Hall park, for clothing ten poor people, and schooling ten poor children of the parish.

ARDLEIGH, the last parish in the Hundred, on its north-west corner, has a pleasant village four miles further on the road to Colchester. It is a large parish, being 38 miles in circumference. The manor of Picotts, which takes its name from a family which held it in ancient times, belongs to E. Reeve, Esq.; Bovills, a title also derived from an owner in the time of Henry II., to W. S. Lamb, Esq.; and Martells Hall to Lord Ashburton. The park, a good mansion, is the residence of J. P. Osborne, Esq. The church is a handsome modern structure, having been rebuilt some years ago.—The parish has the right of sending twelve free scholars to Dedham Grammar School; and the poor have £2. 10s. a-year from Love's charity.

END OF THE HISTORY OF THE HUNDREDS.

HISTORY OF THE BOROUGH, &c.

The Borough of Harwich.

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County Rate.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
				£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Harwich — St. Nicholas .....	{ Harwich, from the Saxon words <i>here</i> , an army; and <i>wic</i> , a castle—the army's castle..... The British <i>Duor-isc</i> —a coast or reach of water .....	340	3383	5447	300 16 10	134 2 9
Dovercourt ...		2966	1068	4289		

The town of Harwich, though it has the largest population, and is the most important sea-port on our coast, is only a hamlet of Dovercourt, extending over about 90 acres. It stands on the north-east extremity of the county, on a strip of land which runs out into the sea, by which it is bounded on the east. Rounding the point to the northward is the fine haven, and the estuary formed by the confluence of the Orwell and the Stour. The town itself is not one of much pretension as regards the character of its streets and the architectural beauty of its buildings. It was said of it long ago "it is a town of hurry and business, not of gaiety and pleasure; yet the inhabitants seem warm in their nests"—a description very applicable to it at the time it was the packet station and the busy outlet for all the traffic to northern Europe. But the cold shadow of official neglect has passed over the locality since then. The profitable bustle of the French war ceased. The government packets were afterwards transferred to another port. "Moody silence" reigned in the streets, and the town and its trade bore visible signs of decay. The sun, however, is beginning to gleam through the clouds that long hovered over the headland. The railway has brought back part of the foreign traffic. The government has turned attention to the protection of its fine port, and a breakwater has been run 1,550 feet into the sea, at a cost of £56,000., granted by parliament, to shelter the harbour and modify the waves, which were making inroads on the shore—this work, with other improvements of the harbour, involving an outlay of £132,000. J. Bagshaw, Esq., has expended a fortune in building villas and terraces, and converting Dovercourt into a fashionable watering-place—a speculation that has ended in the bankruptcy of the individual, but must tend hereafter to the benefit of the place. And it is a spot well calculated to prove attractive to the traveller and the health-seeking loiterer along our coast. If, on a summer afternoon, we take our stand on Beacon-hill, a mile above the town—which is then gently swept by the refreshing sea-breeze, but is a position we should not covet in a wintry keen nor'-easter—a scene in which the picturesque is interwoven with historical memories is spread around us. We stand in the midst of

fortifications which the Romans erected around the spot. The tumulus on which our feet rest was raised either by the imperial race, or the ancient sea-kings who lived upon yonder waters, as a tomb over some honoured chieftain whom they interred here with all the rites of heathen worship; or perhaps, going further back, the ceremony was accompanied with some grim Druidical sacrifice. Away to the east stretches the ocean, the great highway to the northern nations; and on a neck of land running up from the Suffolk coast, extending like a dark streak into its waters, rise the grim walls of Languard Fort, with the muzzles of its slumbering guns effectually protecting the passage into the harbour. Close to us on the land side is a formidable redoubt, whose fire, if necessary, would cross that of the fort. Below it, from the point at which we stand, a broad esplanade runs by the water-side up to Harwich, which is seen beyond with its two light-houses, built in the time of Charles II., the pinnacles of its splendid church, its ordnance depot, its guildhall, and its custom-house—that Harwich on which Queen Elizabeth looked down from yonder hill-top, and exclaimed—“A pretty little town, and wants nothing.” This is a description that does not exactly apply to it now, since, if we are to believe the inhabitants, it wants a great deal. It wants a little more trade; it wants back the packets and the government patronage; and it wants the traffic to the north thoroughly opened up through its streets and port. Beyond the town we look forth upon the harbour, the finest in this part of the kingdom, in which 500 ships, 100 of them men-of-war, have lain at anchor, and ridden out a storm without fouling or disaster. Off to the western side is Orwell haven, near the confluence of that river and the Stour—the scene of the earliest of those sea fights which have rendered our island secure and our history glorious. It was here that fast upon a thousand years ago the fleet of King Alfred encountered the war-ships of the Danes, and beat them; though the infant navy of England did not fare so well in a second fight which took place in these waters soon afterwards. Around the opposite side of the harbour and haven runs the coast of Suffolk; and further inland are seen the pleasant wooded hills which rise above the banks of the Orwell.

Harwich was undoubtedly known to the Romans. Their foot-prints have been traced around every part of it. It was hardly probable that warlike people would overlook a point like this; and accordingly there have been discovered traces of a Roman road, leading from the Beacon-hill field, fragments of tessellated pavements, funereal urns, and buried coins, testifying to the fact that this point was one of the rivets of their chain of mastership. Probably the count of the Saxon shore kept a force here prepared to resist all hostile rovers from sea-ward. Their successors, the Saxons, occupied it as an important military station. This is evident from the name they gave it—the Army’s Castle; and the Danes in turn raised defensive works upon the spot. Formerly fortifications, and the remains of a camp, apparently of great antiquity, were to be seen; and in spite of the attacks of the modern improving pick-axe, may still be faintly traced running along the southern side of the harbour, from just without the town gate to the Beacon-hill field, in the midst of which was the tumulus, regarded, as before stated, as the tomb of some olden chieftain. These works have been considered Roman; but Dale attributes them to the Danes, as well as the bulwarks and the castle of the town itself. It is not, however, till 884 that we have

any direct notice of this neighbourhood. In that year the Saxon Chronicle tells of the fierce battle at the mouth of the Stour—that is, in Harwich haven. Harwich, however, as a town, did not exist at this period. Orwell, it is said, was long after this the living capital of the locality. It stood about five miles further to the east, at the point now called the West Rocks; but the devouring sea has swallowed up its wharves and meadows, its dwellings, its churches, its trade, and almost its memory. In the last century, and occasionally even now, some old ruins of its buildings, a square stone or a prostrated pinnacle, may be seen at low water rising above the waves like the ghost of the drowned city. The river, too, is believed to have undergone great change since ancient days. Tradition has it that it formerly ran in a straighter current than at present, and discharged itself into the sea about Hoasly Bay, under the highlands of Walton Coltness and Felixstowe. What are called the Fleets, between the latter place and Landguard Fort, are stated to be the remains of the ancient channel; so that the entrance to the harbour has been brought considerably more to the southward. It has been asserted that this channel is artificial, but this is improbable. It is more likely to have been produced by the natural action of the waters; because, as the old historian of the town observes, the making of a channel two miles wide is so stupendous a work that it is unlikely to have been accomplished without some record being left of it. From the destruction of the town of Orwell, and the shifting of the shore, Harwich grew into a place of trading importance. This must have been at a very early date. The old walls, most of which have now disappeared, were of very ancient character—so ancient that they must have been raised before the time when we begin to read of the town as a free borough. The castle, too, was very old and of considerable strength. It comprised various buildings and a high tower, the thick walls of which were washed on one side by the Orwell. It contained the guildhall and the town prison, and formed of itself a distinct parish or liberty, called the Castle Point. It had its own church or chapel attached to it. It constituted, of course, one of the chief defences of the town; but neglect and the sapping of the waters having laid it in ruins centuries ago, the corporate body and the prisoners were driven out to seek a home elsewhere; and, thus abandoned, its walls, and tower, and ramparts have altogether disappeared. In the 13th of Edward II. (1312) Thomas Brotherton, son of Edward I., had a grant from the crown of the manor of Dovercourt, with the village or town of Harwich, which from the Conquest had been held by the De Veres; and he obtained the charter of immunities, in which “his men and tenants of the said town” were made free; he also obtained a license for a market to be held on Tuesdays. The history of the Dukes of Norfolk from this time down to the beheading of Thomas in the reign of Elizabeth, is also the history of Harwich. They were the lords paramount, and the town was governed according to their directions. They exercised royal jurisdiction over the place and the adjacent waters; they had a house near the churchyard, where they held courts of admiralty; they appointed various officers, had the return of all writs, and the right to all waifs and strays and felons’ goods, and cognizance over all crimes except treason. When the duke died on the block his rights came to the crown, in which Elizabeth retained the lordships for her life; but in 1597 granted the privileges enumerated to the magistrates of the



borough, and they subsequently passed to the corporate body; but the court of admiralty has long been discontinued. King James granted the manors to Sir John Whitmore, from which family they passed by purchase to Sir Thomas Duvall, who became recorder, and one of the representatives of the borough in parliament. They are now the property of E. W. Garland, Esq.

**THE CORPORATE BODY.**--Harwich was a town before it was a borough, and a borough before it was a free borough, as already seen by the grant of Edward II. This grant was continued by various succeeding monarchs. Of the first form of government nothing is known; but in the reign of Henry VI. the place was ruled by "the bailiffs, constables, and tenants of Harwich." In the reign of Edward VI. the churchwardens were the chamberlains and treasurers of the borough; and in Queen Elizabeth's time it was ruled by twelve burgesses, who were sometimes called capital burgesses. What may be called, however, the great charter of the borough was granted on the 12th of August, in the second year of King James, through the instrumentality of Sir Edward Coke, the attorney-general, who became the first recorder under it. This charter incorporated the burgesses of the borough of Harwich, and "the tenants, residents, and inhabitants of the village of Dovercourt, near, adjacent, and adjoining to the said borough." There was to be a mayor annually chosen out of eight aldermen, who, with twenty-four capital burgesses, constituted the corporation and government of the town—the election of this body being in the capital burgesses alone. This charter also gave the privilege of sending two members to parliament—a right which had once before been exercised in the time of Edward III. (1343), but had ever after lain dormant. The first election under the charter took place in the twenty-first of James I., when Sir N. Rich and C. Harris, Esq., were chosen. The charter also gave a second market on Friday, with two fairs yearly, each to continue three days—one at the feast of St. Phillip and St. Jacob, the other at the feast of St. Luke—with pie-powder courts, &c. This was confirmed by a charter of Charles II., and continued the basis of the constitution of the borough down to the Municipal Act in 1835. Since then the corporation has consisted of a mayor, four aldermen, and twelve councillors, with a high steward and a town clerk. After the castle was found no longer tenable, a town-hall and prison were erected within St. Augustine's Gate. These were sold in 1673; and the guildhall and gaol were built in Church-street, principally at the expense of Sir Anthony Dean, one of the aldermen. It used to be a custom in the borough that those who had not served an apprenticeship should, on taking up their freedom, give a leathern bucket to hang up in the hall, ready in case of fire. Among these was formerly one with an inscription in gold, showing that it was given by the Duke of Albemarle, who was admitted a free burgess in 1674; and another of Colonel Sir Charles Littleton, who was made free in 1671. These disappeared—various others, with lordly bearings and emblazonings, succeeded; but the custom has long been discontinued, and the value of the bucket is paid in cash. The corporation property comprises lands in Beaumont, Tendring, and Thorpe, purchased in 1715, a farm at Great Holland, various houses, shops, &c., in the borough, market tolls, and port dues, the whole producing an annual revenue of £803. 9s. 6d; and this is so well managed that it covers all the expenditure without a borough rate. Before the Reform Act the franchise was limited to the mayor, alder-

men, and capital burgesses, and the number polled at an election seldom exceeded twenty. The number on the register is now 344.

Landguard Fort and the redoubt on the cliffs are the chief defences of the place. Formerly the town was completely fortified; and even so late as 1676 the chief entrance to it was through a ravelin and over a drawbridge. To the east was the Queen's bulwark or battery, raised by the townsmen in 1553, for the defence of Queen Mary when she was residing at Framlingham. To the west were block-houses further out in the water than the castle; and at the Ness was a strong battery. When the walls and other works had gone to decay the latter was removed, the ground levelled, and converted into a royal ship-building yard. In the late war, and in that with the Dutch in 1666, this was in full activity, and from it men-of-war of 74 guns have been launched. After, however, peace came, it was given up by the government; the master ship-builder and the commissioner of the port were withdrawn; and it is now carried on by private enterprise. Landguard Fort is strongly built and skilfully planned. The ancient fortification stood a little further north, as shown by two facers and flanks of a bastion standing on the old site in the last century. The present fort was built in the reign of James I. It has dealt some blows, and has shown itself able to hold its own against the enemies of the country. It was attacked by the Dutch fleet in 1667, when 3,000 men were landed, and took shelter under the sand banks within carbine-shot of the works. The defence was gallantly conducted by Captain Dorrell, and the invaders, soon finding their hiding-places too hot for them, scampered back to their ships, and placed themselves at a cooler distance. The fort was improved at the commencement of the present century, and is well armed, its main batteries mounting thirty-two-pounders on traversing platforms; the bomb-proof magazine contains 500 rounds for each gun; and should a foeman attempt to enter Harwich harbour, or to repeat the experiment of the Dutch, there is little doubt its gallant commandant would give an equally good account of them.

Harwich has often been visited by royal personages. The Queen of Edward II. landed here in 1326, with an army, when she drove the King and the two Spencers into the mountains of Wales; and, says Mill, "No sooner was she and the Prince landed, but it was wonderful to behold how the people on all sides flocked to them." Edward III., in 1340, sailed from this port for Flanders, knowing that the French fleet lay at Sluys to intercept him, and, attacking the enemy with great fury, achieved one of the noblest victories in the early history of the British navy; the French lost thirty thousand men, and of their four hundred ships only thirty escaped. "Greater glory than this," says an old writer, "the English are scarce found to have achieved in any battle at sea." The year before eleven French ships had attempted to burn the town of Harwich, but were beaten off, probably by the militia, as they were in several other places. On his return the King landed at Harwich, from which town he dated the writs for summoning a new parliament. Henry VIII. visited the town on the 8th of June, 1543, but the reason of his visit has not been recorded. Elizabeth, as already stated, was here in 1561. The defensive works were restored and improved in 1666 by Charles II., and in the October of that year the King himself, with the Duke of York and a noble retinue, attended divine service, and tarried two days in the town. William III. was twice at Harwich; on one

occasion sleeping at Mr. Langley's, in Church-street, where he received the corporation in a body. George I. and George II. were often here on their way to and from the continent. In 1728 the Prince of Wales stopped a short time at the "Three Cups;" and the Princess Charlotte landed at Harwich in 1761 on her way to share the throne of George III.

The church of St. Nicholas in Harwich was originally founded by the Earl of Norfolk, about 1210, as a chapel-of-ease to Dovercourt. The tradition was that the chancel was built by the daughter of a tailor, and there was the representation of a pair of scissors in various parts of it. It had, however, fallen into decay, and the present magnificent edifice of white brick and stone, which is 100 feet long and 60 feet in breadth, was built in 1821, at a cost of £20,000, under an act of parliament obtained for the purpose. The church of Dovercourt is an ancient structure, but has been much improved. An old writer gives the following respecting a miraculous cross which in Roman catholic times rendered this church famous:—

"The church of Dovercourt heretofore was famous for a rood or crucifix whose supposed sanctity drew from far into it many votaries and devoted pilgrims with their offerings. The generality verily believed none without great danger, even of sudden death to themselves, might attempt to shut the church doors upon it by day or night; upon which confidence it became more easily to be made the sacrifice of three men from Dedham, and a fourth from East Berghold, anno. 1532, who in a frosty night together entering the secure yet always open church, took it down, and carrying it about a quarter of a mile from thence, upon the green, with its own tapers fired it to ashes, for which three being apprehended, were hanged in several places; one of whom, Nicholas Marsh, suffered death at Dovercourt; the fourth, Robert Gardner, escaped. The three were hanged in chains."

There was a guild of St. George in the church, endowed with lands and houses.

There is a Free School in Harwich, built in King's Quay-street, by H. Parsons, Esq., one of the members, in 1725, the corporation to appoint the master and pay him £20 a-year; it has been further endowed with £50 by John Rolfe, £60 by Daniel Smyth, £25 by William Godfrey, and £150 by J. Robinson. The National School was built by the corporation in 1813, at a cost of £800. There are 52 acres of land in Tendring for the repair of the church, &c., purchased with the produce of property left by William King in 1627. The charities are 40s. a year, left for the poor by Mr. and Mrs. Offley in 1667, and paid by the Drapers' Company; the dividends of £30 stock, left by Mary Wiseman in 1758; a rent-charge of £3 out of a house in Castle-gate-street, for widows of poor seamen, left by Giles Baker, in 1735, and the proceeds of £100, given by Capt. Deane, to be distributed in coals. There are two almshouses in West-street given by an unknown donor, and occupied by four widows. In Dovercourt there are church and poor lands producing over £100, of which £10 are given in coals, and the rest applied to the payment of the clerk and sexton, and the service of the church. The poor have £17 a-year from Henry Smith's charity.

## Borough of Maldon.

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Tithe Rent Charge.	
				Rectorial.	Vicarial.
All Saints' ...	Maldon, from the Saxon words <i>mael</i> , cross, and <i>dun</i> , a hill; Cross-hill; the parishes from the saints to whom the churches are dedicated... ..	55	909	Improprate	£. 384*
St. Mary's ...		1827	1245		330†
St. Peter's ...		1620	2404		

\* The annual value of this parish and St. Peter's, which have been consolidated since the 14th century.

† The value: the benefice is a perpetual curacy.

On entering Maldon a stranger would at once perceive that he was in one of the ancient towns of the county—perhaps the most ancient; for though a notion to which a crude remark of Camden gave rise, that this was the Roman Camulodunum has been thoroughly routed by subsequent demonstration and discovery, there is no doubt this, as an inhabited spot, can lay claim to equal, perhaps to greater, antiquity. The evidence, indeed, is slight. No one, however, can look at the fine Druidical gold medal found a few years since near Maldon Hall, and then at the noble hill upon which Maldon stands, rising boldly above the south banks of the Blackwater, near where that river expands into an estuary, without feeling this was probably a spot on which the ancient Britons lived and worshipped before the name of the Romans was known in the land. There is, indeed, a tradition that Queen Boadicea did battle with the invaders on the lands lying below the hill to the northward, where the railway station now stands; and if so, the navy, who is a great solver of antiquarian questions, ought to have furnished some evidence of it in the course of his work; but he did not, except bringing to light a denarius of the consular period, which probably had nothing to do with the alleged battle. A few other Roman coins have been found in the neighbourhood—one of Vespasian; and another gold one of Nero and Agrippina, which Morant states was regarded with so much veneration that it was always consigned as a precious relic to the keeping of one of the bailiffs for the time being. This is all that is known of it; the coin itself long ago disappeared. That the Romans, however, knew and occupied Maldon, or the spot upon which it was afterwards built, we may safely conclude. It was a point they could not neglect in maintaining their mastership of the country. It would follow, as a matter of course, that they would have some fortification here. But the camp on the acclivity on the west side of the town, which some old topographers set down as Roman, is clearly part of the works raised by Edward the Elder, in 920. They were intended as a protection against the Danes (as related in page 29), who in the following year might be seen clustering thickly in the valley below, and on the opposite high grounds, for the assault of them. They were, however, beaten off; and it would appear that though these free and fierce races held Dengie Hundred, Maldon stood out against them for more than 70 years. In 993 they again besieged it; and after the defeat and death of Earl Brythnorth, who was hastening to its relief, the fortifications were forced, and the place fell into their hands. Just at the entrance to the town, from Chelmsford, we passed

through the midst of this camp—a castle an old historian calls it, but this was a term often applied, at that time, to extensive earthworks; and there is nothing to show that Maldon ever had a castle, or even a wall around it. Part of the site has been built upon—barracks stood here in the time of the old war, which have been superseded by genteel residences; but beyond these are faint traces of the entrenchments, which enclosed in an oblong shape a space of about 24 acres.

The visitor, we have said, will be satisfied at first sight that Maldon is an ancient town. He will not arrive at this conclusion from signs of cobwebs and decay. He will behold fair broad streets, with good houses, shops, and hostelries, and a public-hall,—busy wharves below, where the river is navigable for vessels of eighty tons, while the masts of ships of three times the burthen may be discerned a short mile away in Heybridge waters,—there are the railway and the Chelmer Navigation, ready to bring down the produce of the county, or to carry the imports of timber, oilcake, and coals, further inland,—and if he looks out from the higher spots on the beautiful views to seaward, and along the vale of the Blackwater, he will see agricultural industry busy in the neighbourhood. There is nothing of the decrepitude of age in the appearance and the trade of the place. But there is something about the town, here and there an old wall or gable, which tells of the air of other days. The town-hall of itself gives it a venerable appearance. This lofty building—which is of red brick, and contains the borough gaol, above this the court-house, and a council-room on the third story, which is reached by narrow winding stairs—was erected in the reign of Henry VI.—that is, between 1422 and 1461—by Thomas D'Arcy, Esq., who obtained from that monarch, and held for a short time, the estates here which the Bouchiers forfeited by their attachment to the house of York. Hence it has been sometimes called D'Arcy's Tower. It was sold by that family in 1575, to Thomas Eve, one of the aldermen, and thus came to the corporation.

The CORPORATE BODY, as a governing power, is of very great antiquity. Long before the first known charter is heard of—probably before charters, as we understand them, were in fashion—the burgesses exercised a certain degree of rule, held property, and levied tolls. It is not unlikely that this power originated in the Saxon division and settlement of the county by King Alfred, as in ancient records Maldon is sometimes alluded to as a half-hundred; and that after it was rebuilt and fortified by Edward the Elder, it began to assume the shape and adopt the regulations of a more united community of a burgh. There was a town-hall here before the Conquest, in which the burgesses, or those who exercised authority, met to discharge municipal duties and to administer justice, even to the infliction of the punishment of death, as we find in subsequent grants the right of a gallows was confirmed to them; and there is no doubt that in ancient times the corporation often sentenced men to be hanged—a power which, though long disused, they virtually possessed down to a comparatively recent date. The burgesses, however, in their early days, were the mere tenants of the crown. The burgh was the property of the king, and he leased it or granted it to them on certain conditions. Thus, we find at the Survey, that the king had in Meldune a house and pasturage for one hundred sheep, which appear to have been then in his own hands; but, it is also added, he had 180 houses and a hall—this, no doubt, forming the other

portion of the town—which were let to the burgesses at a certain rent. As holders of this property and rights, derivable from sources now unknown to us, the heads of the community or corporate body exercised various privileges; but certain great lords and grantees of the crown also exercised privileges concurrently with them. In the reign of Henry I., Robert Fitz-Richard was lord of the borough of Maldon; and Wm. De Mandeville, Earl of Essex, who had succeeded to the barony of Wm. Peverel, the lord of Dengie Hundred, obtained from Henry II. the first known charter of the borough. This document, the foundation of the settled liberties of the borough, was ample in its scope, and the rights it gave were extensive and in some cases peculiar. Not only did that king confirm to the burgesses all their lands, possessions, and tenements, within and without the borough, “as far as the bounds of the banlieu of the same,—namely, Haylspett, Morisbroke, Limborne, Billimbroc, Bukerne, Cravenho, and Elmcroft,” with sac, soc, &c., with all their liberties and free customs, in lands, waters, houses, and revenues, to hold by the service of free burgage, but he specially exempted them from aids and amercements levied by sheriffs and foresters; “from danegeld, hydage, carriage, summage, scutlage, tallage, stallage, hastage, and toll in every market and fair, and at the passage over bridges, and along roads belonging to this kingdom”—the latter an exemption which, if it had not been suffered to fall into desuetude, would be of importance to the merchants and persons of Maldon at the present day. Further, they were relieved from the servile duty, often exacted by royal and feudal power in those days, of working at the building or repairs of castles, bridges, causeways, and the fencing of parks; and “from all foreign service, except the finding for 40 days, at their own expense, one ship, for the king’s use whenever he shall be obliged to go personally, or to send an army, for the kingdom’s service; they being first summoned by the royal letters to a certain day and place.” In 1403 the corporation acquired the lordship of the town, which it still holds by a grant from Robert Braybrooke, Bishop of London, and the Chapter of St. Paul’s. Under this they enjoyed the proceeds of a custom of landcheap, by which a person who bought freehold lands paid to the borough 10d. out of every mark of the purchase money. There was also a rent paid for the stalls in the market, a toll from ships and lighters coming in, and a moiety of the pleas of the court. The old charter appears to have become threadbare by the wear and tear and changes of 400 years; and a new one was granted by Queen Mary on the 18th of June, 1553; but the red-tapeism of that day having sent out the document in a defective state, another was substituted for it in the following year, and under this the borough was long ruled and regulated. By this charter a definite shape was given to the governing body, which was to consist of two bailiffs, six aldermen, eighteen capital burgesses, and the commonalty—the two bailiffs to be elected annually from the aldermen on the Friday after the Epiphany, by the aldermen and capital burgesses. The corporation obtained power to purchase and receive manors, lands, and tenements, provided they did not extend to the clear yearly value of £40 beyond reprisals, and were not holden *in capite* or by knight’s fee. The bailiff’s court to be holden in the Moot-hall, had a large jurisdiction given to it over all pleas, real, mixed, and personal; and a court of view of frank-pledge was to be held twice a year, “concerning all tenants and inhabitants of



the borough and its suburbs." The corporation was to have a prison at the Moot-hall, and within the liberty, "tumbrel, pillory, and gallows." They were further to have a market every Saturday; to appoint their own coroners; to hold courts of admiralty, and have the fines and emoluments; to have felons' cattle, escapes, and other goods and chattels; and the return and execution of all writs and precepts not about felony and treason; with the assize of bread, &c. The bailiffs, aldermen, and capital burgesses were to make ordinances and constitutions for the borough, and to "assess reasonable tallages, or taxes, upon the goods of all persons and all burgesses, dwelling within the borough, liberty, and precinct, as well within liberties as without, according to every one's ability, upon the rents, trades, and merchandizes or otherwise, as shall seem to them best;" and the bailiffs, a lawyer, and two burgesses, were to be jointly and severally keepers of the peace. The liability to find, as formerly, a ship for forty days, was continued; but to assist them in this service they were to receive all fines, compensations, forfeitures for felonies, and other crimes, outlawries, waifs, strays, &c., within the borough and banlieu. The exemption from custom and toll throughout England was continued, and this stringent provision for the protection of the right was added—"If any one take toll or custom from any of the burgesses, the bailiffs and other members of the corporation shall go and take out of that city, burgh, or town where customs was so taken, or of the goods of him that took the toll, to the amount of what is taken from their fellow burgess; or the trespasser shall come to Maldon and prove by due course of law that he owes nothing." The bailiffs and members residing within the borough were exempted from serving on juries against their will, or filling any offices out of the borough; three fairs were granted; also the fishing and rights of the river, so that none should "fish or erect cranes and wharves from the Hythe to Rebanks without the license of the bailiffs, nor presume to sell or buy within the water, unless at the Hythe;" and all the olden bounds and limits, and ancient customs, privileges, and franchises were amply confirmed. The right of returning two members to parliament to the bailiffs, aldermen, capital burgesses, and commonalty, is mentioned for the first time in charter; but this was no new right. It had existed, we know, from the second of Edward III. (1328), and has continued from that time with a few breaks in the list, and the partial disfranchisement under Cromwell.

Under this charter the borough was governed for 214 years. In 1768, however, the bailiffs were illegally elected; their right being questioned in a court of law, they were ousted from office: the time for a new election elapsed, and the corporation crumbled to pieces. The right of returning members to parliament continued, as it existed independently of the charter; and in 1810, through the influence and exertions of the representatives of the borough, a new charter was obtained from George III., but the expense attending it amounted to £2,000. This charter confirmed all the olden rights and privileges of the borough; and constituted the corporation of a mayor, eight aldermen, and eighteen capital burgesses, with a recorder and the usual officers; and the freedom was to be acquired by birth, marriage, servitude, purchase, and gift. Quarter sessions and other local courts were also instituted. By the Municipal Reform Act the corporation is composed of a mayor, four aldermen, and twelve councillors, with a town clerk, &c. The present number of parliamentary electors is

909; and the income of the corporation last year, arising from its property and rates, was £908. 16s. 10½d.

The port of Maldon is free—that is, no tolls of any kind are levied on vessels entering it. Its limits extend to Tollesbury Point, on the north side of the mouth of the Blackwater, southward to the mouth of the Thames, and along its western bank to Belmevay Creek, thus including the Crouch and many navigable creeks: Leigh is a sub-port. Within the borough waters, which extend by the charter of 1810 to the Knowl sand, a number of fishing boats are employed in catching flat-fish, codlings, eels, oysters, &c., but no licenses from the corporation have been granted for many years. The copyhold tenure which prevailed in Maldon was the old borough-English—that is, the youngest son, not the eldest, succeeded to the father's estates. This custom, which has ceased, is thus set forth:—

“The olde auncient and lawdable custome of this Burrough is and hath byn tyme out of mynde of man, that if the father die seized in a howse or land within the franchise of this Burrough, the yongest sonne of the first wiffe shall have the heritage. And if the first wiffe dye having noe sonne or sonnes by her but daughters, &c., and afterwards marrieth another woman, and by her have a sonne or sonnes, that then the yongest sonne of the second wiffe shall have the heritage, and so to the third, fowrth, and fyfth, and so forthe. And if he have noe sonne or sonnes but daughters, then the daughters as well of first wiffe, second, third, fowrth, &c., shall have together the heritage, and the yongest shall chouse first according to the custome.”

BEELEIGH ABBEY stood about a mile below the town, to the westward, on the bank of the Chelmer, near where that river weds the Blackwater. It is a pleasant rural spot, shut in by the hills on one side, and sheltered, no doubt, in its early days, by woods and forest lands on the other. It was founded by Robert De Mantell in 1180, and was first peopled by a party of monks of the Premonstratentian order, who emigrated from Great Parndon—tempted to the neighbourhood of the then rising burgh by the prospect of richer patronage. Here they flourished, and took high rank amongst the monastic institutions of the county. Their first possessions consisted of their deserted house at Parndon, with the manor attached to it; and lands, advowsons, and other property which their founder gave them in this district—including the churches of St. Peter's and All Saints in the borough. Ralph De Marci, Beuceline wife of Roger De Langford, Hugh Fitz-Otto, Robert Fitzwalter, and others, became benefactors to the house; so that, when the blow came which silenced their chant and laid low their power, it was found that, besides extensive lands and demesnes around the Abbey and in Maldon, they were possessed of manors, farms, lands, marshes, tenements or rents, in the parishes of Asheldham, St. Lawrence, Bocking, Panfield, Bradwell, Woodham Walter, Moulsham, Goldhanger, Hazleigh, Purleigh, Woodham Mortimer, Norton, Steeple, Tollesbury, the Tothams, Salcot, Ulting, Sandon, Widford, and Great Wakering—the whole producing a yearly revenue of £196. 6s. 5d. At the dissolution, the building appears to have shared the common fate of monastic houses, it being the usual practice to strip them of their lead, ornaments, and everything that was readily saleable, and leave them to desolation—a fact which accounts for so few of them, notwithstanding their solid and massive character, having survived entire to our day. As we look upon their ruins a shadow of regret passes across the mind that they were not preserved and adapted to something in consonance with the changed spirit of the day. What a noble seminary of learning for the borough and the neighbouring districts would Beeleigh have formed

had it been left with a part only of its endowments—the abbot converted into a schoolmaster, the monks into pupils! But all has been diverted from everything like its original purpose. Yonder is the grange, to which the monks gathered in the harvest. There is the Abbey mill, now grown into one of the largest steam and water mills in the county. Here are the grounds in which the canons laboured or loitered away the hours between early matins and the later morning prayer, converted into market gardens, in which the spade has at times turned up stone coffins with the skeletons of former inhabitants of the Abbey, ancient coins, and even hidden treasures. The abbot's house, the hall, and cloisters, are gone. The refectory, with its fine vaulted roof, springing from pillars of Purbeck marble, retains something of its ancient character—it is the gardener's kitchen, with the canopy of what must have been a magnificent tomb, wrenched from above some noble dead, and used as a mantel-piece for the apartment. We pass on to the once beautiful little chapel of the Virgin, which was about thirty-six feet long by eighteen wide. The limestone roof and groined arches were supported by three slender columns of Purbeck—beautiful specimens of the taste of the architects of the twelfth century. But what a contrast between the past and the present! We look back, through the telescope of imagination, and inhale the odour of the incense with which these walls were so often laved in the ancient worship; we listen to the low chant of the mass for the dead; we behold the chapel filled with the abbot, and his monks, and mourning nobles, and hear the voice of the herald as he proclaims over the open grave the titles of Henry Bouchier, Earl of Essex, and the Lady Isabel—names once famous in the county—the first of whom was buried here in 1483, and who, with Lady Mary Neville, still slumbers beneath our feet. We look around, and we find stalls, not of the monks, but of cattle. The place, we are told, was some years ago a pigstye. The feeding trough stood at the altar steps, and the fat hog made its filthy bed on the slab which covered the great lord of the county and the beautiful Isabel.

After the suppression the lordship of the Abbey and the rectory of All Saints were granted to John Gate, Esq., though part of the estates were severed and held by the Vernons, and, after passing through various families, the manor, with Little Maldon and a part of Great Maldon, is held by Dr. Baker, who acquired it by marriage with the heiress of the Shuttleworths. The Doctor resides at the Hall—a good modern mansion, surrounded by tasteful and well-wooded grounds on the south of the town.

Besides the Abbey there was another monastic house in the borough—the priory of Carmelite Friars, which stood on the south side of the town, on the spot now occupied by the house let to Mr. James Wood and Mr. James Butler. It was founded about the year 1291—more than a hundred years after the Abbey—by Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, and a priest named Iselham; but though it enrolled amongst its members several of the ripe scholars of the 15th century, we have few records of its history or notices of any remarkable event in connexion with the white-robed and bare-footed friars whose forms were familiar to the burgesses of those days. The house does not appear to have been one of great magnificence; and as the inmates were of a mendicant order—a community of religious beggars—bidden by their rules to accept endowments or hold property, and were dependent upon the casual alms of the charitable for their daily

bread, it presented no great prize to scramble for at the Reformation. It went, however, with the rest; its revenues being then valued at only twenty-six shillings and eightpence, and having been first leased at the low rent of eightpence, was afterwards granted away, and quickly swallowed up in the lay property of the county. There was, too, in St. Peter's parish a half-religious, half-medical house, called the Leper Hospital, dedicated to St. Giles, and founded, it is believed, by one of our kings. It was for the relief of such of the burgesses as should be afflicted with the leprosy, which was not uncommon at that period; and it was to be ruled by a warden, who was to maintain a chaplain within it. In the reign of Henry IV. it was found, like many a charity of modern times, to be grossly mal-administered. The warden appears to have pocketed the proceeds derived from the manor of Jenkin-Maldon, and other endowments, while he forgot the chaplain, and left the hospital without a leper. The King, therefore, took the whole into his own hands. Afterwards he restored it; but either matters went on no better, or Maldon was so cleansed of leprosy that there was no occasion for the hospital, as in 1481 it was given, with all its lands and possessions, to Thomas Scarlet, the abbot of Beeleigh, for the better support and maintenance of his house. From this time we hear little more of the hospital. It was left in ruins; and some years ago, in clearing them away to convert parts of the old house into a barn, it was found there was a mixture of Roman bricks in the erection—a proof that there once existed Roman buildings in the neighbourhood, of which this was part of the spoil.

Maldon can boast of having sent two artists into the world of fame. Landseer resided here in the early part of his life, and some of the first efforts of his pencil are to be found in the possession of gentlemen in the neighbourhood. J. H. Herbert, too, here fledged his youthful wings. But the borough produced a greater than these—at least in body—Edward Bright, a shopkeeper of the town, of whom the following record has been left:—

“Edward Bright, a shopkeeper, was so extremely fat, and of such an uncommon bulk and weight, that there are very few, if any, such instances to be found in any country, or upon record in any book. At the age of twelve years and a half he weighed ten stones and four pounds; as he grew up, so that in four years more he weighed 336 pounds. He went on increasing, and probably in pretty near the same proportion, for the last time he was weighed, which was about thirteen months before he died, his net weight was forty-one stones and 10 pounds or 584 pounds. At the time of his death, as he was manifestly grown bigger since the last weighing, if we take the same proportion; viz. of about two stones a year, and only allow four pounds addition for last year on account of his moving about, but very little of this will bring him to 44 stone or 616 pounds net weight. As to his measure, he was five feet nine inches and a half high. His body round the chest just under the arms measured five feet six inches, and round the belly six feet eleven inches. His arm in the middle of it was two feet two inches about, and his leg two feet two inches. After his death seven men were buttoned in his waistcoat without breaking a stitch or straining a button. He died 10th of November, 1750, aged 27.”

All Saints' Church, at the head of the town, is a fine ancient fabric, with an old sedilla, double piscina, a fine Purbeck font, and handsome stained-glass windows. The south aisle was D'Arcy's chapel, and several of that family, who founded a chantry in the church, were buried here. A stone in the chancel formerly contained an inscription to one of them of the date of 1428. Here, too, is the tomb of John Vernon, a rich Turkey merchant, formed out of a sepulchral stone which he himself brought from the ruins of Smyrna. The church of St. Peter fell into ruins long since, and of it only the tower remains, the vicarage being consolidated with All Saints'. St. Mary's Church,

standing by the river at the bottom of the town, is reported to have been originally built by Ingelric, a Saxon, in 1056; but the oldest part of the present structure, the lower part of the tower, is Norman. Anciently it was a sea-mark, and had a beacon on its massive tower.

The small grammar school was founded in 1608, by Ralph Breeder, who left £300 to be invested for the maintenance of a schoolmaster; its present endowment consists of Pleyhill farm, Hatfield Peverel, of 20a. 2r. 33p., and two houses in the High-street, for which the master teaches the classics to six pupils, but is paid extra for English, &c. There is an exhibition of £6 for a scholar, at Christ's College, Cambridge, founded by the Rev. Dr. Plume.

This Dr. Plume was a munificent patron of the borough in various respects, and his bequests and endowments will ever make his name respected in the town. He was a native of Maldon; and having been educated at Chelmsford Grammar School, and afterwards at Christ's Church, Cambridge, became Archdeacon of Rochester. He died in 1704, and was buried at Longfield, in Kent, where by his own request an epitaph in Latin was engraved on his tomb, of which the following is a translation:—"Here underneath lies the Archdeacon of Rochester, the greatest of sinners; O that I could say of penitents! Seek his name in the book of life: the day will come that will restore me to the light again." He left a great part of his wealth for augmenting poor livings, and other religious and charitable purposes. As respects this borough he did much for education and literature, and endowed it with a library which few county towns of its size can boast. In his lifetime he built a school upon the site of the old church of St. Peter, joining up to the massive stone tower; and when he died he directed that his library of 5,000 books and manuscripts, some of which are exceedingly rare and valuable, should be deposited in the room above, to be open to the public use. This is now freely accessible, and the number of volumes exceeds 6,000. To pay the salary of a librarian, provide for the schooling and clothing of ten poor boys of Maldon and Munden, and other charitable purposes, he left Ittney farm, of 183 acres, in Munden, and 15 acres called Molehill and Upper Pound Mead, in Maldon. Under a new scheme of the court of chancery, made in 1843, £40 of this is applied to the librarian; £26 for lectures by ministers appointed by the trustees, in All Saints' church; £25 to the National School for 15 free scholars, with £33 for their clothing; £20 for 10 poor boys to be educated at the Grammar School, £20 for their clothing, and £30 for apprenticing two of them; 30s. for the poor attending the lectures; 30s. to the sexton for tolling the bell; and the surplus to be dispersed to poor ministers of Dengie Hundred, according to the donor's intention. The Doctor also gave £400 to augment the vicarage of All Saints'; and bequeathed £200, and the residue of his personal estate, for purchasing and providing tenements and stock for setting the poor of Maldon to work. The old workhouse was built by his executors; and this was sold to the union on the introduction of the poor law in 1836. The charity is managed by ten trustees, two of whom are elected by the town council out of their own members.

Wentworth's charity was founded under the will of Anastasia Wentworth, in 1634. The property consists of two houses, a shop, and garden, called Reed's Place, two houses and a garden called Bridewell, an orchard and garden, and three cottages. To comply as near as possible with the intention of the donor, £10 is applied to the National School, about £20 in clothing and coals to the poor, and the residue to the repair of the church.



## Borough of Saffron Walden.

Probable origin of name—*Weald*, a wood, and *den*, a valley, or the ancient wall near the town, and the great quantity of saffron formerly grown in the parish.—Number of acres, 7,416; population in 1851, 5,911; tithe rent-charge, vicarial, £200.

This borough, which is incorporated for municipal purposes, and never enjoyed the privilege of sending members to parliament, is situated on the north-west of the county, closely bordering on Cambridgeshire, about a mile from the great Newmarket-road. In picturesqueness it is exceeded by few towns in the county. We cannot better describe its position than in the words of Stukely. "A narrow tongue of land," says he, "shoots itself out like a promontory, encompassed with a valley in form of a horse-shoe, enclosed in distant and delightful hills. On the bottom of this tongue are seen the ruins of the castle; on the top, or western extremity, the church, not unlike that of St Mary's at Cambridge. The houses are ranged on the side of the hill and in the valley round the church, the base of which being as high as the buildings, is observed above the roofs." It has six or seven good streets, and includes the pleasant little hamlet of Audley End on the west, Sewers End two miles to the east, and North End and Little Walden to the northward. The pleasant little town presents a favourable specimen of the material and intellectual progress of the present century. Vast improvement has taken place within 50 years. The ancient houses, which in the last century gave an antiquarian character to the place, have made way for handsome modern shops, hotels, and dwellings. The old market-cross that encumbered the square was pulled down in 1818; a range of unsightly old buildings near by were swept away in 1848, and a handsome corn exchange, in the Italian style, rose upon its site; a commodious cattle market having been provided some years before on the spot where formerly stood the old Eight Bells. Several of the streets have been widened; and a fine museum, rich in specimens of zoology, geology, antiquities, and coins, with a spacious public hall attached, has been erected near the ruins of the castle. The culture of saffron—said to have been introduced by Sir Thomas Smyth, through means of a pilgrim who in his travels stole a bulb and concealed it in his palmer's staff—which was largely and profitably carried on in the parish, and had fixed its name upon it, had altogether ceased in the last century. The manufacture of checks and fustians, which once flourished here, has, too, decayed; but there are many large maltings and several breweries in the neighbourhood, and altogether it is a town of fair trade.

The CASTLE was intimately connected, in the early ages, with the history and importance of the town. Camden says that its erection about 1067 first gave life to the place; but we believe there was a seat of power and a well-inhabited ville here long before that period. Waledon, as it was called, belonged, in the time of Edward the Confessor, to Ansgar, master of the horse to that monarch. After the conquest it came, amongst the 48 lordships in this county which he acquired as his share of the Saxon spoil, to the great De Mandeville, who fixed his chief residence here; not, however, on yonder delightful spot where rise the princely pinnacles of Audley End, but on this hill, just above the eastern extremity of the town. He is generally reputed to have been the builder of the baronial castle. It is more probable, however, that he found some work of the kind here, which



he strengthened and extended, perhaps rebuilt; and thus arose the feudal castle of the Norman lord of the district, frowning upon the country without, but adorned within with all the rude magnificence of that age. Rampart, wall, and tower, then covered a wide space of ground, as we know by the foundations which have been traced far away from the ruins of the solitary keep by which we are standing; and here, in this open space, which probably formed the enclosed court or castle yard, often mustered the chivalry of the district, as they gathered round their lord to obey the royal summons, or returned, with battered armour, from some feudal fray. Here we know the lordly warriors assembled for the tournament, for it was in one of these martial encounters, and upon this spot, that, in 1252, De Leiburne, as if by accident, but it was thought by design, in revenge for a broken leg in a former encounter, rode at De Montenei without a socket on his lance, and pierced him fatally through the throat, to the horror of the fair dames who beheld the scene, and of the retainers, tenants, and burghers of the town, who had been admitted through the castle gate to witness the sports. The castle, and in later times the mansion attached to it, which stood in Bury field adjoining, must have been the scene of much of the trouble and much, too, of the pageantry of the time. But all has vanished;

"The sweet young bride, in her beauty's pride,  
Hath twined her garlands there;  
But time, in his flight, hath slain her knight,  
And mingled with dust the fair."

We have no record as to when the castle was abandoned, and the work of decay and desolation set in; but we see what it has done. All that now remains is a shapeless mass of wall ten feet thick and about thirty high, believed to be the oldest piece of stone work in the kingdom, and to have formed a portion of the subterraneous apartments. On the west and south sides of the town are a range of stupendous earth works, commonly supposed to be outworks of the castle; but Lord Braybrooke believes them to be of higher antiquity, and to have formed part of the walls from which the town took its name. A large number of skeletons have been found in these works, in one case those of a man and horse, as if where they fell; indicating that they have been the scene of a battle—the objects of attack and obstinate defence. On the common close by is the maze, cut in the chalk—a piece of singular antiquity, conjectured to have been formed by the ancient Britons, either as a circus, a place of martial exercise, or perhaps in connexion with the mythical ceremonies of the Druids.

The De Mandevilles for generations filled high offices of state and trust. King Stephen advanced them to the dignity of Earls of Essex, but Geoffrey deserted that monarch, seduced by the offers of the Empress Maude, who amongst other privileges gave him a right to remove the market from Newport to Walden. His treason was detected, and he was arrested and stripped of his honours. His son was restored; and the family continued till 1372, when it became extinct in the male line. By marriage Walden came to Henry V., and it formed part of the dower of his widow. The manor was also held by Henry VI.; Richard III. granted it to the Duke of Buckingham, but it is doubtful whether he ever had possession: at all events it reverted to the crown on his execution, and continued there till the time of Henry VIII.

THE CORPORATION is based on one of those ancient guilds, semi-

religious and semi-trading, which were very common in the towns in Roman catholic times. Each member was expected to bring some property into the common stock, and provision was generally made for a priest to sing mass for them. The guild here was established about 1400. It was dedicated to the Holy Trinity; and it appears to have been governed by officers annually elected. In 1392 commissioners sat in the town of Walden to inquire into rents and other sums due to the king. They found that every brewer should pay a farthing a quarter on malt brewed to sell; every one who bought or sold a quarter of malt, or kept the market, or opened a shop window, should pay a farthing; and all brewers and bakers were compelled to have their corn ground at the king's mill. These impositions injured the town, and in consequence many persons of influence joined and obtained the incorporation of the guild in 1413. The grant included a schoolmaster to teach grammar, and a priest. In a grant by Henry VIII. to the guild he desired to be evermore remembered in their perpetual prayers, and he charitably desired that he might be admitted a brother of their order, and his dear wife, Queen Catharine, a sister thereof. Many noble persons were enrolled. Dame Catherine Semer, of Walden, devised all her estates to the treasurer and chamberlains of the said fraternity and their successors, that they should order and rule the same, and bestow the profits in maintaining a priest to pray in the church for the souls of the king and queen, herself and family, and all members of the said fraternity, and their souls, and to have a salary of ten marks and a dwelling. This, as we have said, was the foundation of the corporation. Upon the dissolution of the guild by Edward VI. a charter of incorporation was procured for the town through the influence of Sir Thomas Smyth, the secretary of state, dated February 18, 1549. The body was described as the treasurer, chamberlains, 24 assistants, and commonalty; and the charter gave them power to hold a mid-lent fair, a court of pie powder, and a court once in three weeks for the recovery of small debts. This charter was confirmed by Mary and by Elizabeth; but the corporate body had a struggle for their right in the invasions made upon the corporations by Charles II. and James II. The latter granted them a new charter on the 29th of July, 1685, in which they were described as the recorder, mayor, deputy recorder, aldermen, and town clerk; but it was specially provided that these officers should be removable at the will of the crown. Under this the Duke of Albemarle was named the first recorder, and Sir Edward Turnor, knight, mayor. After some struggle James appears to have beaten down the corporation; but it was revived by a new charter of William III., dated Dec. 19, 1694, by which the ruling body was constituted of a mayor, recorder, deputy recorder, twelve aldermen, a town clerk, coroner, serjeants-at-mace, and the clerk of the market, with power to purchase or alienate estates, to make bye-laws for the government of the town, to use a common seal, and impose penalties. The mayor, while in office and for a year afterwards, the recorder, deputy recorder, and two senior aldermen, were made justices of the peace. It also contained a grant of two fairs with a court of pie powder, and a three-weeks' court for the recovery of small debts. Under the Municipal Reform Act the corporation was constituted of a mayor, four aldermen, and twelve town councillors. The jurisdiction of the corporation is co-extensive with the parish. It has always been understood that of old it pos-

essed the power, like most boroughs, of trying capital offences and inflicting the punishment of death. This seems to be borne out by the fact that in 1597 charges occur for making and setting up the gallows, and for two halters. In 1609 a prisoner who had escaped was brought back and hanged. In 1631 the gallows was again erected, and in 1654 two men named Moulton and Douglas, who had been confined some years in Walden gaol, were executed in the parish, there being a charge in the books for knocking off their fetters, and for a quart of canary when they were hanged. A rising ground between Newport and Walden is still called Gallows-hill. The toll of the market, and the mill, belonged to the guild, and after having reverted to the crown in the time of Edward VI., came back to the corporation through the Earl of Suffolk. The corporation possesses a few houses in the Market-place, with some ground rents, stallage, &c., and their annual income amounts to about £135. The present Town-hall was built in 1761, on the site of an old Moot-hall.

THE ABBEY OF WALDEN stood near the site of the present noble mansion of Audley-end, at a point where four roads meet; and it was planted there to enable the monks the better to dispense the hospitalities of their house to the pilgrim traveller. It was founded in 1136, by Geoffery de Mandeville, the first Earl of Essex of that family, as a priory for monks of the Benedictine order; and in 1190 it was converted into an abbey, dedicated to God, the Virgin Mary, and St. James. The earl endowed it with the churches of Walden, Great Waltham, High Easter, Shelly, and Great Chishall, in Essex, besides lands in this district, and similar property in other counties. Some of his successors looked upon the house with rather a jealous eye, but still it went on and flourished. At first the buildings were of a small and humble character; but Reynold, a noble Norman, being appointed prior, the establishment rapidly increased in wealth and reputation. The house was enlarged, the church re-built in a style of considerable magnificence, and the number of monks increased to twenty-six. At Reynold's death he was buried in the church, in front of the altar of the Holy Cross. King Stephen granted the monks an annual fair. Edward I. gave them in 1295 a weekly market. Many others became benefactors to the house; and several of the nobles of the land were buried within the precincts of its splendid sanctuary. Altar and tomb, however, alike perished, and their resting place is unknown. The Reformation came and left it a ruin. The Lord Chancellor Audely obtained a grant of it, its revenues then amounting to £406. 15s. 11d.; and so great have been the changes produced by the works of Audley End, that the site of the abbey and its church is now a matter of doubt. It is believed, however, that they stood upon the spot now forming the eastern lawn and flower gardens, as occasional discoveries show that extensive foundations, broken columns, and mutilated mullions lie buried there; and in the domain near by have been found leaden coffins and skeletons—probably of the proud abbots, or the warrior nobles interred in their church, now turned up from their resting place as nameless bones.

AUDLEY-END, THE SEAT OF LORD BRAYBROOKE.—Scarcely a mile away, to the west of the town—in fact upon the spot from which we have just seen the abbot and his monks expelled—stands the lordly mansion of Audley-End, surrounded by tasteful grounds, lawns, and gardens. The finely-wooded and spacious park is diversified by hill and dale,

and from some of the higher points beautiful views are presented. On one side is the town of Saffron Walden, partly lost in the intervening valley. On the hill to the east is the Temple of Concord, and on another eminence on the west a circular temple, erected by Lord Howard; Ring-hill at Littlebury, with its Roman works, is included in the domain; below us the silvery Cam, cut into the shape of an ornamental canal, winds its way through the grounds and grassy vale; while further away are the belting shrubberies, dark woodlands, and game preserves.

On the suppression of the Abbey, it was granted by Henry VIII., together with the lordship of Walden, which we have seen had been for some time in the crown, to Sir Thomas Audley, who first as speaker of the House of Commons, afterwards as Lord Chancellor, had been a chief instrument in carrying out the views of the king as to the suppression of the monasteries; and he took especial care to be well paid for the work by a large share of the spoil.\* He was created at the same time Baron Audley of Walden; and it has been generally stated that he converted the abbey into a country residence. This does not appear to be the fact. He founded and endowed Magdalen College, Cambridge, and by the statutes made "the possessors of the late monastery of Walden" the visitors in perpetuity, with the right of nominating the master,—a right which Lord Braybrooke still enjoys; but he left the buildings to decay and the place deserted. It was not till Lord Audley had been laid in his tomb in Walden church,—till after the Duke of Norfolk, who married his daughter and heiress, had died on the block, and his son had succeeded to the estate—that the princely towers and pinnacles of Audley End began to arise. This gentleman, the famous Lord Howard (Baron Howard of Walden), who took part in the destruction of the Spanish Armada, was created Earl of Suffolk. Being Lord Treasurer, and his wife—if we may credit the malicious gossip of that day—having accepted large bribes from the Constable of Castile when negotiating peace with England, he determined to erect a mansion that should surpass in size and magnificence all the private residences in the kingdom. He accomplished this. He procured a model in wood from Italy, at a cost of £500; either Bernard Jansen or John Thorpe was selected as the architect—the evidence is in favour of the latter; it was commenced in 1603, and finished in 1611, the sum of £190,000 it is generally stated, but certainly £200,000, being expended upon it. King James, who visited it soon after, sarcastically observed it was too large for a king, though it might do for a lord treasurer; and it was found so majestic an incumbrance of the estate that none of the other possessors were able to keep an establishment equal to its size and magnificence. Lord Braybrooke in his "History of Audley End" says:—

"When the house was completed, it consisted, besides the offices, of various ranges of buildings, surrounding two spacious quadrangular courts. That to the westward was the largest, and was approached over a bridge across the Cam, through a double avenue

\* Great doubt was long felt as to his extraction, till the following entry was found in the Burgess Oath Book of Colchester—"A.D. 1516. Thomas Audley, Gen: natus in Colne Comitibus in com: Essex, Burgess." He is believed to have been born in the Hay House at Earls Colne, not long since demolished. Soon after 1529 he was appointed town clerk of Colchester.—*Lord Braybrooke's History.*

of limes, terminating with a grand entrance gateway, flanked by four circular towers. The apartments on the north and south sides of the principal courts were erected over an open cloister, and supported by pillars of alabaster; and on the eastern side a flight of steps led to the entrance porches placed on a terrace running parallel to the great hall, which formed the centre of the building; beyond the hall was the inner-court, three sides of which only remain, and constitute the present house."

Queen Elizabeth was twice a visitor here; and we read on one occasion of the corporation riding in and presenting her with a cup and cover of silver double gilt, weighing forty-six ounces, and costing £19. 3s. After the restoration, in consequence of the havoc which parliament and the Puritans had made with the palaces, Charles cast his eyes upon Audley End, and shortly after it became a royal residence. The King visited the house while in treaty for its purchase; and the corporation presented him with a silver cup and cover filled with saffron at the charge of £20. In the autumn of 1668 the Queen and the court were at Audley-end, and on the 11th of October the King attended Walden church. The conveyance of the house was executed on the 8th of May, 1669. The purchase-money was £50,000, of which £30,000 was paid, and the rest left on mortgage. In the following year the court was established at this new palace, and one of the courtiers writing in October describes the following adventure of the Queen and her party--

"There being a faire near Audley End the Queen, the Dutchess of Richmond, and the Dutchess of Buckingham, had a frolick to disguise themselves like country lasses, in red petticoats, waistcoats, &c., an so goe see the Faire. Sir Barnard Gassolgn on a cart jade rode before the Queen, another stranger before the Dutchesse of Buckingham, and Mr. Roper before Richmond. They had all so overdone it in their disguise, and look'd so much more like antiques than country folk, that as soon as they came to the Faire the people began to goe after them; but the Queen going to a booth to buy a pair of yellow stockings for her sweet-hart, and Sir Barnard asking for a pair of gloves, sticht with blue, for his sweet-hart, they were soon, by their gibrish, found to be strangers, which drew a bigger flock about them. One amongst them had seen the Queen at dinner, knew her, and was proud of her knowledge; this soon brought all the Faire into a crowd to stare at the Queen. Being thus discovered they, as soon as they could, got to their horses; but as many of the Faire as had horses got up with their wives, children, sweet-harts, or neighbours behind them, to get as much gape as they could till they brought them to the court gate. Thus, by ill conduct, was a merry frolick turned into a pennance."

In 1701, the state not caring to retain the palace, the house and park were re-conveyed to the fifth Earl of Suffolk, in settlement of the £20,000 which had been left on mortgage; but it is asserted that some of the rich tapestry was first carried off to Windsor, and other noble monuments removed. Twenty years afterwards three sides of the great quadrangle and various offices were pulled down, leaving the inner court only untouched. Another twenty years elapsed, and the hand of the destroyer was again laid upon it. The Earl of Effingham, to whom the property had passed, sold the house and park to Lady Portsmouth, for £10,000; and in 1749 Lord Portsmouth demolished the whole of the eastern wing, thus destroying the splendid gallery, which was 226 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 24 feet high. At this period the noble pile lay in a state of lamentable desolation. Parts of it were decaying; many of the glassless windows were blocked up with sack-ing; and there was even an idea of pulling it down, or converting it into a silk factory. The present branch of the noble family, however, came to the rescue. Sir John Griffin Griffin, who was created Lord Howard, and in 1788 Baron Braybrook, of Braybrook, in Northampton, having succeeded to the house in 1762, laid out £100,000 in alter-



ing and improving the mansion and grounds. The property, with the second title noticed, passed to R. A. Neville, and in 1825 to the late Lord, who did much to renovate the mansion, and restore what remained of Audley-End to its ancient splendour. The present Peer, the Right Hon. Richard Cornwallis Griffin, who was born in 1820, succeeded him in 1858.

The style of the mansion is intermediate between the Gothic and the classical. The western, or principal front, is ornamented with two projecting porches, each having 17 marble columns of various colours at the angles. The balustrades are perforated, and variously ornamented. The large square headed windows, with stone mullions, in many cases project from the rooms; and the summit is adorned with turrets and clustering chimneys. The hall, which is 90 feet long, 27 feet wide, and 29 feet high, lighted by five windows, is entered by the portico, and through a vestibule, on the northern extremity of the west front. A glance around it will impress the visitor with an idea of the ancient character of the place. Visions of the old baronial days flit across the mind as we gaze on the curious oak carvings of the chimney-pieces, and of the screen, with its grotesque figures in bold relief, at the northern end—or the dark wainscoting extending twelve feet up the walls, its panels and the space above enriched with olden portraits of family and historical interest; while from the brackets float the silken banners of the different possessors of the lordship, from the days of the De Mandevilles. Many of the portraits in this noble apartment, and upon the staircase, are by the master hands of their time—Holbein, de Heere, Kneller, Vanderbouck, Lely, Ramsey, and others; and as we traverse the mansion the eye is everywhere arrested by these rich works of art. In the summer drawing-room, which terminates the west front, and is 41 feet long by 27 wide, is the splendid picture of "Venus wounded, returning from the chase," and others by Van Goyen, Paul Brill, Jordaens, and Sir Peter Lely. The state apartments are on the south side of the mansion. The state dressing-room contains pictures by Wouvermans, Breughel, Otto Marcellis, Canaletti, Gerard Douw, and Rottenhamer. The state bed-chamber is a splendid apartment. The ceiling is by Adam, and has a deep and richly gilded cornice. The bed is of light blue silk, embroidered with flowers, fluted pillars, and a cornice of white and gold, decorated with the Howard crest, and a baron's coronet, with military trophies in the angles. The pictures are by Stranover, Verelst, Peter Castels, Tilliman, Breughel, and Wouvermans. The ladies' state dressing-room was fitted up for Lord Howard, as a boudoir, at a very great expense. The ceiling and walls are painted by Viagil Rebecca, who copied the triumphs and sacrifices from Montfaucon's *Antiquities*, and the female figures from *Herculaneum*. The hangings of the recess are of satin; the pillars and soffit are of green and gold; and the cornices and frames of the panels are enriched with gilding. Over the fireplace is the original grant on vellum, of an augmentation of arms from Charles I. to the first Earl of Sterling, dated at Greenwich, May, 1634. The initial letters and the borders are finely illustrated. The bed-rooms on the east side contain pictures by Hoppner, Wyck, Tilliman, Berkhaydn, Bloemaert, and Lucatelli. The dining room is 46 feet 3 inches long by 21 feet 9 inches wide, and 17 feet high. It is lighted by two large bow windows on the north side. Amongst the portraits are Thomas, first Duke of Ormond, in armour, by



Kneller; the Earl of Arran, by the same; Mary, Queen of England, in a Fontange head dress, holding a fan, by Vandervaaert; a whole length of George II., by Pine, supposed to be the only original portrait of that monarch; Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, believed to be by Gerard; Colonel Lunsford; the first Marquis of Cornwallis, by Sir William Beechy; and Sir Charles Lucas, by Dobson. The library, which is 47 feet long by 19 feet 5 inches wide, is at the eastern extremity of the south wing. It is painted stone colour relieved by rich gilding, and the curtains are of crimson damask. The large east bow window commands a fine view of the park and grounds. The books, which number 7,000 volumes, include a splendid Psalter in folio, executed about the time of Edward I., in which gold is introduced with a profusion seen only in MSS. of the highest class. There is a tradition that it was presented to Sir Thomas Corwalleys by Queen Mary. There is also a copy of the Aldus Plinney, large paper, in 3 vols. 8vo., the only one known to exist except that which Brunet points out in the Magliabecha library at Florence. The south library is intended for topographical works. The curtains, of crimson Florentine damask, were presented to Henry Neville in 1670 by the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The damask is in good preservation, and the first quartering of the Nevilles is worked in the pattern. Amongst the portraits are those of Lord Howard De Walden and his two wives, by West; the latter in the costumes of the Sibyls of Dominichino and Guercino. The drawing room is 39 feet 6 inches long, 22 feet 6 inches wide, and 16 feet 11 inches high. The chimney piece, of carved wood, is richly gilt, and the walls are hung with crimson. Amongst the pictures are St. Catherine, by Guercino; portrait of Jane Lady Braybrooke, by Pickersgill; the Virgin and Child, by Tasso Ferrato; Joseph, husband of Mary, by Guido; Venus going into the Bath, by La Forete; views of Venice, by Canaletti; views, by Van Goyen; the Marriage of St. Catherine, by Andrea Del Sarto; a landscape, by Bergham; our Saviour and the Money Changers, by Rembrandt; a battle piece, by Wouvermans; a portrait, by Holbein; the Angels appearing to the Shepherds, by Teniers; and Sir Dudley Carlton, by Vandyke. Immediately adjoining is the saloon, 60 feet long, 27 feet 3 inches wide, and 20 feet 8 inches high. Dolphins and sea monsters are represented in bold relief upon the ceiling, which is divided into 32 compartments, ornamented with raised borders, and from each angle hang pendants of considerable dimensions, elaborately wrought, producing a striking and singular effect. The walls for 12 feet are fitted with wood work painted in white and gold, the cornice and freize being supported by pilasters at equal distances, the spaces between which are filled with whole length portraits of the different persons connected with the history of Audley End. All parts of the room are elaborately and richly fitted up, and the chimney-piece surpasses all in the mansion in the beauty of the carving and the brilliancy of the gilding. In the centre are the arms of Thomas Earl of Suffolk, with female figures and ancient heads on each side, as well as the arms and crests of Lord Howard De Walden and his two wives, painted by Rebecca. Amongst the portraits are those of Lord Chancellor Audley, the first Earl of Suffolk, with a view of Audley End, which he built, in the back ground; Lady Essex Howard, by Sir Peter Lely; the first Lord Griffin, by Zeeman; Elizabeth, Countess of Portsmouth, by

Jarvis. The south lobby contains five portraits by Sir Peter Lely. The picture gallery is 70 feet long, 14 feet wide, and 14 feet 8 inches high, and connects the two wings. It contains 19 portraits, mostly of the noble families who have been connected with Audley End. The chapel is 51 feet long, 26 feet 10 inches wide, and 21 feet high. It is the north-west corner of the building. It has a nave and side aisle in miniature, with pointed arches, clustered pilasters, and a groined ceiling. The bow windows are enriched with paintings of the Adoration and the Last Supper. The private and other apartments are adorned with about sixty other pictures, many of them by the first masters.

The Church of Walden, planted on the hill top above the town, well merits the character given of it by Walpole as "one of the highest and most beautiful parish churches in England." It was erected in the reigns of Henry VI. and VII., on the site of a smaller and much more ancient edifice. In 1790 an Act of Parliament was obtained, and £4,000 raised, in addition to £1,000 given by Lord Howard, for its repair; a large sum was expended in 1831 in rebuilding the spire and other works; and the sacred edifice has just been again thoroughly renovated. It is in the perpendicular style; the entire length is 200 feet: the breadth 82 feet; the tower 85 feet, and from the ground to the top of the spire is 193 feet. Formerly the floor was nearly covered with ancient brasses, but most of them have disappeared. Several monuments, however, remain; amongst them, in the south chancel, is the black marble altar-tomb of the Lord Chancellor Audley, bearing upon it what Fuller called "a lamentable epitaph," and the following copy of it is a convincing proof that the term was not misapplied—

"The stroke of deathes inevitable dart. Hath  
Now alas of lyfe bereft the hart. Of syr  
Thomas Audeley of the garter knyte; late  
Chancellour of England under our pruce of  
Might Henry Theight worthy high renoune and  
Made by him lord Audeley of this towne obiit Huius-  
timo die Aprilis anno domini 1544. Regni regi  
Henrici 8. 36 Concellariatus sui 18 &  
sue ætatis 56."

There is good provision made in the town for educational purposes. The Free Grammar School in Castle-street, founded by Dame Johane Bradbury and her brother, the Rev. J. Leche, in 1525, and restored by Edward VI., is endowed with a rent-charge of £12 out of the manor of Willingale Spain, and 5A. 2R. 18P. of land near the school. There are 16 free scholars from Walden, 4 from Newport, 2 from Little Chesterford, and 2 from Widdington. The Charity School is endowed with a rent-charge of £5 out of Lumpits and Limekiln field; a farm of 20A. 3R. at Steeple Bumpstead, purchased with £500 left by Thomas Penning in 1717; and an estate at Thaxted, purchased with £200 left by Lady Osborn, in 1752; the 24 children on the foundation are clothed and educated in the National School. The British School in East-street, and the Infant School in Abbey-lane, were built by the Gibson family; the girls' British School is in connexion with the old School of Industry.

King Edward the Sixth's almshouses in Abbey-lane were originally founded in 1400, by Roger Waldine, Archbishop of Canterbury, in

connexion with the Guild of the Holy Trinity; and were re-established by Edward VI., in connection with the corporation. The houses were rebuilt about 35 years ago, on a new site, at a cost of £5,000; four additional houses were added by the Gibson family in 1840; and the whole form a handsome range of 34 dwellings, with a chapel in the centre—a sheltering and hallowed asylum for 34 aged poor parishioners, who receive a stipend of 6s. 6d. each. The endowments of this noble charity consist of 281A. 0R. 19P. of land at Wimbish; 130A. 1R. 11P. and various tenements in Walden; and ten rent-charges, producing an annual income of about £900. Part of the ancient almshouses were rebuilt in 1782; these were allowed to remain, and four having been added by the Gibson family, they afford dwellings for 20 respectable poor people, elected by the trustees; live rent-free, but have no stipends.

The other charities of the parish are the following—19A. 26P. of land called “Dreys,” left by Geoffrey Symond in 1481 for repairing the highways; £5 out of Broad Green Farm, Chrishall, left by William Turner in 1618 for doles of bread; 37A. 32P. of land at Hinton, purchased with money left by Thomas Turner in 1623, for bread, clothing, &c.; land left by William Leader, in 1632, for bread; 11A. 3R. 12P. of land at Sewers End, purchased with £200 left by A. Penniston, in 1654, for a weekly distribution of bread and money to six poor people at the church,—no suspected witches or wizards to share it; 27A. of land in the Manor of Tollesbury Hall, left by Thomas Adam, in 1623, two-fourths for apprenticing poor children, a fourth for clothing the poor, and a fourth to the master of the Grammar School if he did not serve a cure; 19A. of freehold, and 16½A. of copyhold land at Hadstock, left by Matthew Broomfield, in 1682, for clothing and apprenticing poor children; a house and 15A. of land at Ashdon, purchased with £100 left by the Earl of Suffolk in 1688, and £138. 15s. by Edmund Turner in 1690, applied in apprenticing poor boys; two houses and 14A. 3R. 13P. of land at Walden, and two rent-charges of £4, producing about £100 a year, left by Eliza Erswell in 1657, and distributed in money to the poor; a house and 6½A. of land in Walden, and a rent-charge of £4, purchased with £200 left by Edmund Turner in 1700, two-thirds to the poor of Audley-End, and one-third to the poor of Walden; a house, &c., in Church-street, granted by Jane and Joseph Sparrow in 1705, for the poor; the dividends of £731. 14s. stock, purchased with £600, left by Lady Falkland in 1776, to be yearly distributed amongst twenty poor men and nineteen poor women; the dividends of £2,000 stock, left by Lord Howard in 1796, in trust with the occupiers of Audley-End, for a yearly distribution of clothing amongst twelve men and twelve women of Walden, and five men and five women of Littlebury; a rent-charge of 5s. for the poor of Castle-street, left by Matthew Rand; the poor have also from Chrishall a portion of Martin’s charity, and from Clavering a share of Barlee’s charity for apprenticing poor children. C. Fiske, Esq., in 1844, left £1,000 stock, the interest to be given to augment the salary of the head master of the Grammar School; Miss Sophia Rickard, who died six months ago, has left a share of the residue of her property to the alms-houses.

## Liberty of Havering-atte-Bower.

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Value of Benefices.
Romford ... ..	The Saxon word <i>Rom</i> , broad or wide; and <i>ford</i> , the broad ford. The Saxon word <i>Haver</i> , a goat, and <i>ing</i> , pasture—a goat's pasture. The Horned Monastery... ..	...	5868	£700; Tithe of Romford and Havering, £3,042 15s. 6d.
Havering ... ..		9173	423	£80; with 72 Acres of Glebe.
Hornchurch ... ..		6299	2378	£700; Improprate Tithe, £1,520 17s. 11d.

This ancient Liberty, which is ruled by a high steward, deputy steward, clerk of the peace, and a coroner, and has the singular privilege of appointing its own magistrates by popular suffrage, is situate about twelve miles from London. It is bounded by Becontree, Ongar, and Chafford Hundreds, but extends to the Thames on the south, where it narrows to less than a mile in width. It is about four and a half miles from east to west, and extends about nine miles inland to the northward. Romford, with its Town Hall, in which the quarter-session and other courts are held, is now virtually the capital, as it has been for ages past, though Hornchurch was the mother parish, this being originally an off-shoot or chapelry. It has been generally assumed that in early time the high road passed through Hornchurch, and so on by Upminster, Warley, and Hutton, to Ingatestone; but we are disposed to believe that the Romans carried their road from London to Colchester very nearly along the present tract, and that close to this spot they fixed their station of *Durolitum*, mentioned by the Itinerary. The tradition of the neighbourhood states this to have been at Old Church, situate half a mile from Romford, on the green lane or Roman road, running from Great Ilford to Hornchurch; and this tradition is in some degree confirmed by an old map of Romford, of the date 1696, on which about 40 acres of land are variously described as "Ruin Meadow," "Great Ruings," "Lower Ruings," and "Three Little Ruings," all being near the church.

The whole of this peculiar district was, in the earliest ages, one manor, under the King, and formed a part of Becontree Hundred; but as the palace at Havering gradually grew into greater importance, and became more frequently a place of royal resort, it was erected into a Liberty, with courts of its own to administer justice in ecclesiastical, civil, and criminal matters, even to the inflicting of the punishment of death—the object being to give greater security to the court, and dignity to the officers who dwelt around it. This, however, being royal demesne, and often the home of the sovereign, there is reason to believe that privileges were enjoyed, and local powers were exercised, not usual in a simple manor, and which the charters afterwards granted did little more than consolidate and confirm. For instance, it was one of the ancient privileges that "all the tenants of the said manor may marry their sons and their daughters without license from the King and his bailiff, except cottagers." Again, the first charter of Henry IV. recites, that the lordship or manor of

Havering-atte-Bower is of ancient demesne, and that real and mixed actions concerning lands and tenements, &c., were allowable before the steward, and suitors "and have ever been accustomed since the time whereof no memory of man is to the contrary, in the same court to be pleaded and determined."

This charter was renewed or confirmed, in some cases extended, in the 5th of Edward IV., 7th Henry VII., 2nd Henry VIII., 1st of Mary, 1st of Elizabeth, 2nd of James, 7th of Charles I., and 16th of Charles II., so that the preservation of its rights seems to have been the constant care of the kings from about 1400 to 1676. This charter states that the royal heart was moved to compassion by the lamentable complaints of the tenants and inhabitants as to their being sued in other courts many times "by their ill-willers, troubled, vexed, grieved, and molested, to the no small loss and grievance of them the said tenants and inhabitants, and to the hazard of their utter undoing;" therefore he grants "to the tenants and inhabitants which now are, and for the time hereafter shall be, and to their heirs and successors, that they shall not be forced, compelled, or bound to answer before any justices, judges, or commissioners of us, or our heirs, in any real, personal, or mixed actions, arising or to arise of, in, or upon the lands and tenements aforesaid, holden of that aforesaid manor." Further, it confers the singular privilege of electing a magistrate in the following terms:—"Of our more abundant grace, we have granted, and by these presents do grant, unto the aforesaid tenants and inhabitants, and their successors, that the steward of the said manor for the time being, so long as he shall continue in the said office, and one of the discreetest and honestest tenants or inhabitants aforesaid, to be from time to time chosen by them and their successors, shall be for us and our heirs, justices of the peace, and keepers of our peace to be kept within the said manor of Havering aforesaid, and as justices of us and of our heirs, to hear all felonies, trespasses, and all other unlawful acts whatsoever, committed or to be committed within the same manor." A fair to commence on the eve of St. John the Baptist, and last three days, was granted; and the Liberty was freed from the visits of the purveyors of the court—an important exemption, as these gentry were in the habit of taking the best of the land, wherever they found it, for the royal table, and paying about half-price for it; but there is some evidence that even this grant did not always protect the larders of the inhabitants. Edward IV., in confirming the charter, provided for the appointment of a deputy-steward, to be also a justice of the peace. The tenants and inhabitants were made a body corporate; and this addition to the charter, after reciting that they intend to found a hospital for poor, sick, aged, and maimed in the wars, gives them power to hold property of the value of 100 marks for the purpose. Though we do not find any mention of it in the charters, the inhabitants appear in old times to have enjoyed a general exemption from tolls; and the carts of the parishioners of Havering, with the mark of the seal upon them (showing the gateway of the palace and the ring below the door) still go free through the city of London.

Hornchurch, as before remarked, was doubtless the first settled locality. Probably it was a good village in the midst of the cleared forest when the good Bishop Cedd came through this district as a missionary preaching to the pagan Saxons. We know that Henry II. gave the manors and church to the Hospital of St. Bernard, in Savoy,

and a cell for a master and poor brethren, called the Horned Monastery, was founded there to look after the property and protect their rights; which, however, was suppressed with the priories alien, and secured by William of Wykeham, for his New College, at Oxford, to which they still belong. Hornchurch, too, was a place of trading importance 600 or 700 years ago, and its inhabitants were actively engaged in the fulling and dressing of leather, according to the fashion of that day. But even at this period Romford was growing up as a rival. In the twelfth century a great part of the now thickly-peopled suburb was wood. We read of the wood of Romford being held by Roger Bigod under the King; but a cluster of houses had been planted by the wayside, and grew rapidly. The inhabitants, too, had taken largely to manufacturing the leather dressed by the men of Hornchurch into the coats and other garments like those we remember in our boyhood as the not uncommon clothing of the husbandman; and Henry III., in 1247, granted them a market to promote more readily the traffic in hides and skins and the manufactured articles. Thus they went on till the positions of the two places were thoroughly reversed. Hornchurch has become a pleasant, but comparatively a small, village. Romford is a goodly town, with one of the largest cattle markets in the county or the vicinity of the metropolis. It has good shops and excellent hotels; its court-house, and its assembly-hall. Its suburbs are extending by Laurie Town, on the eastward, and also in the direction of the railway station; though the traveller, as he ranges its main street, will find little of architectural beauty to detain his steps, save the splendid new church, now happily relieved from the row of wretched shambles for the use of butchers on a market-day, which long shaded the beauties of the temple with the shabby lumber of mammon. At the time when Romford had grown into a place of sufficient importance to require a church of its own, the spot on which the sacred edifice now rears its lofty spire was a wilderness or wooded common. The monks of St. Bernard, who as the owners of the mother church held much of the property in the parish, had, by leave, in 1323, built a chapel for the inhabitants of Romford, at a place still called Old Church, half a mile distant. This being found inconvenient Henry IV. gave the inhabitants leave to remove it to the common, granting them at the same time, in aid of the building, "the oaks growing on the ground;" and it is a singular fact, that in 1850, 400 years afterwards, the roots of these very trees were found by the workmen in digging the enlarged foundations for the present tower. In 1410 a bull was obtained from Pope Alexander V., granting the inhabitants the right of sepulchre here, they having been compelled before that time to carry their dead to Hornchurch. This chapel, dedicated to the Virgin and St. Edward, stood till 1849, when its walls were pulled down, its foundations widened, and the present elegant structure, in the decorated or middle-pointed Gothic style, was erected, with a tower and spire rising to the height of 150 feet, at a cost of about £7,000. This sum was raised by subscriptions and the aid of the College and the Church Building Society.

It has been stated by authorities to which we are disposed to pay respect, that Romford was anciently governed by a high bailiff; but we find no evidence that a chief officer with this title ever existed in the town. The supposition is founded no doubt upon a story which we find in Stowe, as to an execution which took place on his door



step, in consequence of the severe measures taken for the suppression of false news in the then prevailing commotions.

"Amongst those apprehended (says he) was the bailiff of Romford, a man very well beloved. He was early in the morning of Mary Magdalene's day, then kept holiday, brought by the sheriffs of London and the knight marshal to the well within Aldgate, there to be executed upon a gibbet set up that morning; when being on the ladder he said words to this effect—'Good people, I am come hither to die, but know not for what offence except for words spoken by me yesternight to Sir Stephen, curate and preacher of this parish, which were these:—He asked, What news in the country? I answered heavy news. Why? quoth he. It is said, quoth I, that many men be up in Essex, but thanks be to God all is in quiet about us; and this was all, as God be my judge.' Upon these words of the prisoner Sir Stephen left the city and was never heard of since amongst them to my knowledge."

The gentleman referred to was probably the bailiff of the manor under the high steward—an officer whom we still find in existence; or Stowe misdescribed the title of the steward.

While Hornchurch and Romford were improving in trade, and the latter was pushing its streets into the freshly cleared forest lands, Havering, three miles to the northward, was the hunting seat and often the quiet resort of the sovereigns of the land. It had been occasionally the palace-home of some of our early Saxon kings, and it was a favourite resort of the saintly Edward, whose residence here gave rise to the legend of the ring (recorded page 33\*)—and who found but one annoyance in these bowers and solitudes—the impertinence of the nightingales, who persisted in mingling their sweet notes with his evening prayers. He earnestly implored God to deliver him from this misery, and since that time, says one of the marvellous tale-tellers of that time, "never nightingale has been heard to sing in the park as in other places, but many are heard without the pales,"—and we are assured that their delicious notes are still heard amid the shady groves of the pretty village. The antiquarian, however, who visits Havering, will return with a feeling of disappointment from a scene which is sanctified in his mind by the royalty of remote ages. He will find a pleasant village, lying in the rural quietude of the present day, and commanding from the eminence on which it stands beautiful views into four or five counties, the landscape bounded on one side by the Thames and the hills of Kent and Surrey, some twenty miles distant. But he will look in vain for the park in which the Confessor prayed and the palace in which he died,—for the house five times visited by Queen Elizabeth, and in which she is said to have passed some of her happiest days,—for the room in which Charles slept when he met Mary de Medicis, whose counsels assisted to bring him to the block. The buildings have disappeared; the bower is gone; the style and character of the palace are forgotten, except as we can glean from a plan made or copied by Lord Burleigh in the time of Elizabeth. The park, however, must have been very extensive, for the great De Veres and others were keepers of it. The old buildings were evidently of soft white stones, as these are being

\* At the coronation of Edward II. it is recorded that the king's first offering was a pound of gold in the form of a king holding a ring in his hand. His second was eight ounces of gold in the shape of a pilgrim putting out his hand to take or give the ring. This device represented the legend of Edward the Confessor receiving the ring from St. John the Evangelist, from whence *Havering* derived its name. This very ring is declared by tradition to be the coronation ring her present Majesty the Queen received at her inauguration.—*Agnes Strickland's Lives of the Queens of England.*

constantly dug up on or near the green. Even tradition falters when you inquire the exact spot on which the palace stood; but there is no doubt that it must have been immediately west of the church. A modern villa occupies the site of part of it; and the only remnant left above ground, a portion of the ancient stone work, six feet high, and from twelve to eighteen feet in breadth, which appears to have been undisturbed since the days of the Confessor, has been worked into the belfry and vestry, and forms a part of the walls. The Rev. R. R. Faulkner, the present incumbent, in a touching memoir of Emma Vale, one of the pupils of his village school, who was accidentally shot in 1846, says this church, which is of brick, and about 400 years old, was formerly the Royal chapel for the King, Queen, and household; and he adds—"While the palace was standing in this place the pious Bishop Hall often preached here before King James." There were two royal palaces at Havering—that which we have just been noticing, and Pirgo, built at a later date, and now represented by Pirgo Park, the late seat of Robert Field, Esq., who built the present mansion a few years since. The latter was often held by the queens as dowry; and in these quiet retreats they took refuge in days of melancholy and sorrow. Hither the youthful betrothed consort of Richard II. was sent and guarded as a captive during the sufferings and murder of her husband; and was detained here two years afterwards. Here the widowed Queen of Henry IV. was dwelling when she was seized and carried off a prisoner on the charge of compassing the death of the King by sorcery; but was afterwards released and died here in 1437. Pirgo Palace had a chapel attached to it for the use of the household and the foresters; but Queen Elizabeth granted the estate to Sir John Grey, after whom it was long held by the Cheke family; but in 1770 the old mansion was pulled down, and the house erected which has lately given way to Mr. Field's noble mansion. Havering Palace continued in the crown after Pirgo was granted away. The visit of Charles I., however, was the last occasion on which the foot of a sovereign trod its halls. Its destruction was then close at hand. Under the Commonwealth the palace and park were seized by a commission, and in 1652 they were sold in two lots for about £9,000. The purchaser was Deane, a violent adherent of Cromwell, and one of those who signed the death-warrant of Charles; and who seems to have had a shrewd presentiment that his reign would not be long. He cut down the trees in the park, and probably pulled down the buildings to turn the materials into money, as nothing more is heard of the palace after this period. The royal manor, however, was continued in the crown till about 36 years ago, when it was put up to public auction, with all its rights and prerogatives, including the power of appointing the judges and the administrators of the laws in the Liberty, and was purchased by Hugh M'Intosh, Esq., whose successor, D. M'Intosh, Esq., is the present lord.

Romford has had some romantic visitors in its time. Hither the heroine of the old Elizabethan ballad of "The Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal-green"—the pretty Bessie—wended her way when she set out on her pilgrimage in search of fortune and a husband—

"Shee kept on her journey untill it was day,  
And went on to Rumford along the hye way;  
Where at the Queene's Armes entertained was shee,  
Soe faire and wel favoured was pretty Bessie."

The town, it appears, was not insensible to the power of beauty at that day, and hearts were set in commotion by the fair stranger—

“The young men of Rumford in her had their joy ;  
 Shee showed herself courteous and modestly coy ;  
 And at her commandment still wold they bee,  
 Soe faire and soe comlye was pretty Bessee.”

The knight who, making pride bend to love, carried off the prize, and had his reward in finding her De Montfort's daughter, is said to accord with the families in the neighbourhood.

In 1668 a visitor of another kind appeared. A man of hard, determined aspect called at the house of an apothecary in the town, and, under the name of Weston, engaged to leave his wife there for a time. This was the desperate Colonel Blood, the terror of the government in Charles's reign, and who planned the audacious project of stealing the crown and royal regalia from the Tower. He was now bent on the errand of liberating a companion who was about to be conducted prisoner through a distant part of the country. He succeeded after a desperate conflict, but was nearly killed, and concealed himself, probably at Romford, till his wounds were healed, meditating, as his memoir says, further revenge.

Since the destruction of the royal palaces many of the venerable mansions of the Liberty which clustered around it have passed away. The names of them still remain, but they represent the mere wrecks of their former state. They are dwindled into farm-houses, with broad gravel roads in place of the drawbridges which formerly led to them, and in some cases the military moat narrowed to a horse-pond, in which “cows may cool and geese may swim”—a more peaceful but a less picturesque scene than they presented of old. They have indeed been succeeded by handsome modern seats, which show the progress that has been made in convenience, and comfort, and taste, and prove that the district has not diminished in wealth. Among these are Priests, the pleasant residence of Octavius Mashiter, Esq.; Marshalls, on the north of the town, the seat of David McIntosh, Esq.; Hornchurch Lodge, the house of Thos. Mashiter, Esq.; and the Bowerhouse, at Havering, near the site of the old palace, the seat of E. P. Matthews, Esq.; but they lack the savour of old historical interest. There was Marks, about two miles west of the town, a fine old mansion, which probably took its name from some branch of the widespread family of Merc. It is believed to have been built by Sir Thos. Urswych, who died there in 1479; it afterwards passed to the Hervey family, and subsequently, by marriage and adoption, to the Mildmays, one of whom, Carew Hervey Mildmay, resided here in the time of the Commonwealth, and having taken an active part on the side of the parliament, he was subjected to an unpleasant visit from the royalists, under the Earl of Norwich, who halted here in June 1648, on their march to Colchester, when Marks being unprepared for a siege, its lord was compelled to save himself by an ignoble flight from a window, and an improvised passage across the moat. Yet Archdeacon Grant, to whose M.S. “Lectures on Romford” we are indebted for many of these facts, describes it as a place built for defence in troublesome times. It had its moat and its drawbridge, a square tower and battlements, small windows, secret ways and hiding places in the floors; and as it stood long uninhabited, dropping bit by bit to decay, it was looked upon with superstitious awe by the ignorant. There

were tales of mysterious underground communications ; and ghosts in dim and shadowy forms,

"Or wrapped in shroud or grim funereal pall,  
Held midnight revel in the ruin'd hall."

All these, however, were put to flight about 1808, when the old house was razed to the ground ; but the manor remained in the family until 1854, when it was sold to the crown. Gooshays, too, had historical interest clinging about it as the seat of the famous Avery, or Alured Cornburgh, Esquire of the body to Edward IV. and Richard III., and whose long quaint inscription is preserved in Weever. His stately tomb remained in 1634, when the heralds visited Romford church, and their interesting description of it, with its "Table of Brass," is included in the "Visitation of Essex," c. 21, fo. 512, Coll. of Arms. Cornburgh's Chantry House still stands in the market-place, the house immediately east of the church. After Mr. Cornburgh, at a long interval, came the Meads, one of whom—William Mead—was son-in-law to George Fox, the famous Quaker, who often visited him at Gooshays, and, indeed, lived there the winter before his death in 1690. The other ancient mansions were Bretons, near Hornchurch, for centuries the stately home of the great family of Ayloffs, rebuilt in the last century by a nephew of Vulture Hopkins ; Nemes, once the seat of the families of Roche and Witherings ; Wright's Bridge, where a branch of the old house of Wright, of Kelvedon, long flourished ; Pettits, near Romford, one of the many seats of the family of Comyns ; and Hare Lodge, now down, the home of the Grafton family, one of the oldest and most enduring in Romford. Reden Court, which was anciently held by the service of finding litter (dried rushes used in lieu of carpets) for the king's chamber as often as he came to Havering ; and the manorial mansions of Cockrells, Mawneys, Gobions, East-house, and others, have degenerated into farm houses. Stewards remains ; but we allude not to the Stewards to the south of the town, belonging to Mr. H. Lawrence. That is a counterfeit, and usurper of the name, and was only the farm or grange to the manor-house. The ancient Stewards, sanctified as the birth-place of the poet Quarles, was the large house called Romford Hall—an assertion for which we have the authority of Mr. E. J. Sage, whose name is a tower of strength on antiquarian questions in this district. There is little notice of this estate till the reign of Elizabeth, when it came into the Quarles' family ; and Francis, son of James Quarles, of Stewards, Esq., "the honest inoffensive poet," as he has been called, was born here in 1592. He was destined for public life, and was cup-bearer to Elizabeth, of Bohemia, and afterwards secretary to Archbishop Usher ; but some of his works, and his attachment to Charles, rendered him in disfavour with the ruling powers. He was hardly used, and took greatly to heart being plundered of his books and manuscripts—an outrage which was believed to have hastened his death, which took place in 1644. He was the author of various works, but is best known by his "Emblems," of which innumerable editions have been published. Southey observes—"These 'Emblems' have had a singular fate ; they are fine poems upon some of the most ridiculous prints that ever excited merriment ; yet the poems, in which the ore almost equals the dross, are neglected, while the prints have been repeatedly republished with new illustrations." Criticism, however, of late years has done

more justice to Quarles; and the "Emblems" of the Romford poet will live long after the great mass of the light trash of some celebrities of the present day have been forgotten.

Gidea Hall, however, about a mile from the town to the eastward, appears to have been, in ancient days, next to the royal palaces, the most important mansion in the Liberty. There is no mention of this as a manor till the time of Edward IV., when it belonged to Sir Thomas Cooke, who was Sheriff and Lord Mayor of London, and was knighted in 1465. He laid out the park and projected a noble mansion, having received the royal license to build it as "a castle of stone and chalk, turreted, moated, and embattled." The War of the Roses, however, then disturbed families and desolated the country; and these feuds interfered in the accomplishment of the peaceful design. Sir Thomas had hardly completed the front of his lordly mansion when he was drawn into the troubled vortex, and the further progress of the building was suspended during his life. We find the history of his case thus recorded, and it affords a curious illustration of the trivial matters that were construed into treason at that period:—

"One Hawkins having requested of him the loan of a sum of money, he refused when he understood it was for the use of Margaret, Queen of King Henry VI. Hawkins being committed to the Tower in 1467, and put to the rack, mentioned this amongst other things which one would have thought could not then have been accounted criminal. However, Sir Thomas was committed to the Tower, and, by means of Sir John Fogge, indicted for high treason. Whereupon his house at Geddy Hall was plundered of the furniture and all that could be carried away; the deer in his park, rabbits, fish, &c., destroyed, for which he could not get any recompense. For though by the integrity of the chief justice, Sir John Markham, he was acquitted of treason, and found guilty of misprision, yet he was committed first to the Compter, and afterwards to the King's Bench prison, from which he could not be released without paying £8,000 to the King and £800 to the Queen. The chief justice was also displaced."

The hall was completed by the grandson of Sir Thomas, the famous Sir Anthony Cooke, father-in-law of the great Burleigh, and grandfather of the celebrated Lord Bacon, in a style which made it a seat of learning,—for his daughters were amongst the most learned ladies of the time—and a house fit for the reception of royal sojourners. The style was that which prevailed after the seats of the nobility had ceased to be little fortified castles; and learned epigrams and classical inscriptions were affixed in various parts of the dwelling. A chapel, in which marriages and baptisms were performed, was attached to the hall, and is mentioned in the parish register. As a man of superior attainments Sir Anthony was appointed one of the preceptors of Edward VI. On the accession of Queen Mary he was seized and committed to the Tower on the charge of assisting Lady Jane Grey, who had resided at Gidea Hall, and received part of her education there; but was soon after liberated, and resided as an exile in Germany. On the accession of Elizabeth he returned to Geddy Hall, and became High Steward of the Liberty; and on his death was buried in the old church of Romford, with a monument, and a long epitaph, in which the reader is told—

"In that heap of carved stones doth lye  
A worthy Knyght, whose life, in learning shedd,  
Did make his name to mount above the skie.  
With sacred skill unto a King he redd,  
Whose towarde youth his famous praises spreadde;  
And he therefore to courtly life was called,



Who more desyred in study to be stalled.  
 Phylozophy had taught his learned mynde  
 To stand content with countrys quiet life,  
 Wherever he dwelt as one that was assynde  
 To guard the same from syndre stormes of stryfe."

Queen Elizabeth honoured him with a visit in 1568, and was entertained at the hall with great parade and splendour. Mary de Medicis, too, mother of the Queen of Charles I., halted here on occasion of the visit which set London in commotion. She landed at Harwich; the King proceeded on the 9th of November, 1637, to Chelmsford, to meet her, and conducted her to Gidea Hall, where she received for the night the hospitality of the widow of Sir Edward Cooke, while Charles returned to Havering Palace, then in too wretched a state to receive his royal visitor. The Gidea Hall of the present day is not, however, the mansion with which these old historical associations are entwined. The name of Cooke died out from Geddy Hall about two centuries ago; the name occurs in the register for the last time in 1604. At the beginning of the last century the property was purchased by Sir John Eyles, who pulled down the ancient hall and erected a modern square brick mansion. Richard Benyon, Esq., afterwards enlarged it and improved the grounds. It next became the residence of Mr. Black; and at his death it passed to his co-heiresses, who married William Neave and Alfred Hamilton, Esqrs. The Hall is a pleasant seat, with a well-wooded park intersected by a canal and ornamental lake. Alfred Hamilton, Esq., is the son of P. P. Hamilton, Esq., and a daughter of Lord Francis Seymour: this branch of the family is next in entail to the present Duke of Hamilton.

Dagnam Park, the seat of Sir Richard Digby Neave, is a handsome mansion, standing in a park of 100 acres on the north-eastern verge of the parish, bordering upon South Weald. The estate appears to have taken its name from William De Dagenham; and upwards of 400 years ago it was held by the Earl of Northumberland of the crown, as of the manor of Havering-atte-Bower. It was for many years the chief seat of the ancient house of Legatt, which for twelve generations flourished in the Liberty of Havering, and occupied many of the great houses, but died away soon after the great rebellion. After them came the Wrights from Wrights-bridge, who rebuilt the house on a grand scale. There they were often visited by no less a personage than Mr. Samuel Pepys, who ran away to Dagenham, from the plague of 1665. He gives a most amusing and highly graphic account of a courtship and marriage there in July, 1665. Pepys describes the mansion in his diary, 16 July, 1665, as "being the most noble and pretty house that ever for its bigness I saw." In 1772 it was purchased by Sir Richard Neave, who was created a baronet in 1795—a man of great commercial eminence in the city of London, governor of the Bank of England in 1780, and auditor of the public accounts. He was descended from Adam Le Neve—a family originally, it is believed, of Norman extraction—who resided at Quid-denham, in Norfolk, in the reign of Edward I. Sir Richard Digby Neave, the present possessor, the third baronet, married the daughter of Lord Arundel, of Wardour. The first baronet pulled down the old house, and erected on a new site the present elegant seat, which commands without fine rural views, and within is enriched by a collection of paintings principally of the old masters.

Besides the church of Hornchurch, a spacious stone fabric, the new church at Romford, and the church at Havering, there is also a







district church at Noak Hill. That at Hornchurch is a perpendicular building, with a fine spire, standing on a noble tower. It contains some fine memorials of the Ayloffes, amongst them a beautiful altar tomb to Wm. Ayloff, of the date of 1517. There are also various inscriptions on personages connected with public affairs or the court; amongst them the following:—

“Peerce Tenante, Esq., Servant to our late Sovereign K. Edward 6, and Queen Mary, and also one of the Gentlemen Ushers in ordinary the space of 32 years to our Sovereign Lady Q. Eliz. He died in Nov., 1560, aged 70.”

“Thomas Witherings, Esq., Chief Post-Master of Great Britaine and Foreign Parts, who died in 1651.”

“The Right Hon. Thomas Clutterbuck, treasurer of the Navy in the reign of George I. He died in Nov., 1742, aged 46.”

“Humphry Pye, Citizen and Writer of the Court Letters, and Attorney of the Common Pleas. He died October 22, 1625, aged 52.”

Some barbarian has blocked up the fine east window; and the fine old edifice demands judicious restoration.

The only charity in Havering is an endowment of £10 a-year out of Pirgo Park, given in 1724 by Dame Ann Tipping to a school she founded, and which is now conducted on the national system.

In Hornchurch there is a free school for sixteen boys, endowed with £10 a-year out of part of Langton's Park, given by Alice Aylett, and the dividends of £200 stock purchased with a legacy left by William Jacob, in 1813. John Pennant in 1597 left four tenements for almshouses; on the site a workhouse was afterwards erected, but on the formation of the Union the building was divided into cottages, part of which are occupied rent-free; there are also Painter's Almshouses, given by Anthony Ram, in 1699. There are eight acres of land left for the church by William Talbot, in 1563, and two acres given by William Gogney, in 1627. The other charities are two cottages and two acres of land purchased with benefaction money and £20 left by Sibell Skeall, in 1678, for repairing her tomb, and the surplus to the poor; a house and garden left for the poor by William Oakly, in 1693; a rent-charge of £5 for the poor, and £1 for sermons, out of a farm in Hay-street, left by William Armstead, in 1657; the dividends of £105 stock left by Thomas Page, in 1811, for poor widows, and repairing his tomb; the dividends of £1,000 India stock, left by John Massu, to be equally divided between ten poor men who have never received parochial relief. The poor have also 20s. out of Ford Lodge, left by Thomas Clarke, in 1738; £3 from South Sea Annuities, left by David Rickett, in 1787; the dividends of £105 stock given by Hannah Richardson, in 1811; and of £100 stock left by John Richardson, in 1797; the rent of 1A. 32P. of allotment awarded at an inclosure in 1812; half Webster's charity from Romford; the interest of £18 in the Savings' Bank, left by John Bourne, in 1821; the interest of £100, left in 1811, by William Higgs, who also left £100 to be lent in four sums, free of interest, to four poor deserving tradesmen or small farmers, for three years,—but part of which has been lost. A rent-charge of 21s. left by Burchett Whennet, in 1780, has not been paid for some years; and an acre and a half of marsh land left to the poor by Samuel Ballard, in 1691, was destroyed by the Dagenham breach in 1700.

At Romford, Reede's Almshouses, in North-street, are a noble charity for six poor men of Romford, Hornchurch, and Dagenham, and their widows after them. They were built in 1482, by Roger Reede, who endowed them with 146A. 1R. 16P. of land; they consist of six

tenements for men and two for widows; one man who keeps the accounts and preserves order is called the ruler, and has a salary of about £35; the other men have £26, the widows £16; and all are supplied with clothes, coals, and medical aid. By a decree of Chancery for the regulation of the charity, in 1824, out of the surplus, clothes were to be distributed to the poor of the three parishes. The charity-school was founded by James Bosworth, early in the last century, and appears to have been rebuilt in 1727; the present boys' school was added in 1835; and by a new scheme laid down by the Court of Chancery in 1833, it is open to children from the three parishes of the Liberty "for the purpose of education in the principles of the christian religion, as taught and professed in the Church of England." It is now combined with the National school, 45 boys being on the foundation and 20 girls; the property of the school consists of two cottages and a plot of ground in Romford, with about £1,200 in the funds, and there is a good list of annual subscribers. For apprenticing from this school two poor boys of Hornchurch, and one of Romford, Mary Hide left £200 in 1714, which was invested in a rent-charge of £10. The other charities are, £100 left by Lady Burleigh, to be lent to five poor tradesmen, free of interest; two houses given by Robert Ballard for repairing the church paths; three rent-charges left by Lewis Betta, in 1669, £4 for apprenticing poor boys of Romford, 20s. for repairing the church footpath, and £2 for equal division among eight decayed husbandmen of Collier Row and Town Wards. The poor have 40s. out of a farm at Hay Green, left by William Armstead; an acre of land purchased with money left by Robert Palmer; £3 out of two tenements left by Robert Reynolds, in 1627; £3. 13s. 6d. from Navy Annuities, left by Hannah Richardson; and half the rent of Webster's Tile Kiln—the proceeds of these charities being distributed at Christmas.

The Liberty of the Sokens.

This is a very ancient and peculiar jurisdiction, lying in the midst of Tendring Hundred, running from its centre down to the coast. It comprises the following three parishes—

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Name.	Number of Acres.	Population in 1851.	Assessment to County rate	Tithe Rent Charge.	
					Rectorial.	Vicarial.
Thorpe ... ..	The Saxon word for village ... ..	3203	1294	5974	890	227
Kirby ... ..	Kirk, a church, and tye, near ; or a dwelling ... ..	4757	932	5116	840	230
Walton-on-the-Naze	{ The wall to keep out the sea } —wall-town ... ..	3260	729	4016	270	133*

\* The vicarages of the three parishes are united.

The Sokens,—which is a name derived from the Saxon word *Socc*, “a peculiar power or jurisdiction”—date back to the Saxon days of King Athelstane. This, at least, is the first mention we find of the Liberty ; but it had probably existed as a separate community, or little principality governed by its own officers, and to a certain extent by its own laws, even before that period. In the year 941 it bore the name of Eadulfesnesa, from Eaduff, a Saxon theyn, when it included thirty manses and 4,000 acres of land ; and under this title it was given by the sovereign we have named to the church of St. Paul. It was found in the canons at the survey ; and it continued to be held by the dean and chapter till the reformation. It could hardly be considered monastic property, but the 8th Henry seized the district as part of his common spoil ; and in 1551 Edward VI. granted it, with its manors and advowsons, to Sir Thomas Darcy. From him the Sokens descended to the Earl of Rochford, who held them in the last century, with all their olden privileges and powers, which constituted them almost a little independent state. He is styled—“The Lord of the Liberty, franchise, domain, and peculiar jurisdiction of the Sokens,” within which no bailiff but his own could make an arrest ; he appointed a vicar-general in spiritual causes, who kept a court at Thorpe, and had cognizance of all wills and testaments within the district. The customs as to the copyhold lands, too, are singular. The fine is 1s. an acre, and 2s. for a cottage ; the tenants may pull down their houses without license, cut down small trees, and grant long leases without the leave or interference of the lord. Modern usage and acts of parliament have pared away and abated these privileges. The jurisdiction as to wills is abolished ; the spiritual powers of the vicar-general have been abrogated ; but the present lord of the Sokens, Edward Chapman, Esq., of Harwich, possesses all the other ancient rights, and appoints a coroner for the district.

THORPE is a neat little town ; and its police-station, its magisterial meetings, and its small corn market, held on Wednesday evening, give it the dignity of the capital of the district. It extends eastward to Haniford Water, where vessels of 100 tons can trade. The principal manor in the parish is the Hall, the seat of J. M. Leake, Esq. This estate passed from the Darcys to Earl Rivers, and was afterwards

held by Thomas Wharton, Esq., secretary to Queen Henrietta Maria. Stephen Martin, Esq., purchased it in 1723, under a decree of the Court of Chancery; and having acquired by will the estates of Admiral Sir John Leake—one of the naval heroes who fought with Van Tromp, and who was commander-in-chief of the fleet in 1707—he assumed the name and arms of that family. He was succeeded by his son, Stephen Martin-Leake, Clarencieux King-at-Arms, the author of “*Nummi Britannica Historia*”—an historical account of English money, and other works. The present possessor, J. Martin-Leake, Esq.—who was called to the bar in 1800, succeeded his father in 1836, and is one of the chairmen of the county quarter session—resides at the Hall, which was rebuilt in 1835. It is a handsome and commodious mansion, standing in a small but well-wooded park. The church is a large and handsome building. Between the pillars in the south aisle is an arch which formed the tomb of a Templar, whose effigy now lies in the vestry, and appears to be of the age of Henry III. Tradition used to tell that the tomb was that of the King of Landemere Hall; but, by the arms, it appears to have been raised over one of the family of Salberghe. In connexion with this parish, the following romantic story is told, in a publication of 1752, relative to “the beautiful Kate Cannom,” as she was called, who was married to the Rev. A. Gough, the vicar:—

“About the 1st of August, 1752, a strange gentleman, calling himself Mr. Williams, of Hamburg, merchant, landed in the Colne, with a singular chest, which the custom-house officers insisted on opening, which they accomplished after much resistance from the gentleman, and found it to contain the embalmed body of a lady. Suspecting a murder had been committed, they seized both it and the gentleman, who at length confessed that he was Lord Dalmeny, the eldest son of Earl Rosebery, but was born and educated in Italy, and never was in England till about three years before, when he visited London, and there fell passionately in love with a beautiful lady, whom he married, and travelled with her over the continent in the hope of restoring her health. On her death-bed at Verona she confessed that her maiden name was Catherine Cannom, and that she was the lawful wife of the Rev. Mr. G., then vicar of Thorpe, in Essex, and requested her second husband to bury her in that parish. Lord Dalmeny declared that he did not know that she had been previously married; and ultimately the two husbands became reconciled, and both attended her funeral.”

KIRBY has two little villages, lying half a mile apart, called the Lower and Upper streets, and runs to the promontory called the Naze, where it has a quay and a little port. At the hall the lord of the Sokens usually holds his court. The dependent manor of Kirby Hall belongs to the Honywood family; and Sneating is attached to the prebend of that name in St. Paul's Cathedral. Three small islands, Horsey, Holmes, and Pewit, lie along the shore and in the bay. Of the latter, which contains about 500 acres, but is mostly covered at high tides, Fuller, in his “*Worthies*,” tells the following tale:—

“There is an island of some 200 acres near Harwich, in the parish of Little Oakley, in the manor of Matthew Gilly, Esq., called the Puet Island, from *Puets*, in effect the sole inhabitants thereof. Some affirm these are called in Latin *upape*, whilst others maintain that the Roman language doth not reach the name, nor land afford the bird. On St. George's day precisely they pitch on the island, seldom laying fewer than four or more than six eggs. Great is their love to their young ones, for though against foul weather they make to the main land (a certain prognostic of tempests), yet they always weather it best in the island when hatching their young ones, seldom sleeping whilst they sit on their eggs (afraid, it seems, of spring tides), which signifieth nothing as to securing their eggs from the inundation, but is an argument of their great affection. Being young, they consist only of bones, feathers, and lean flesh, which hath a raw gust of the sea. But poulterers take them, and feed them with gravel and curds (that is,



physic and food); the one to scour, the other to fat them in a fortnight; and their flesh thus recruited is most delicious. Here I say nothing of eringo-roots growing in this county, the candying of them being become a staple commodity at Colchester. These are sovereign to strengthen the nerves; and pity it is, that any vigour acquired by them should be otherwise employed than to the glory of God."

The poor have 2A. 2R. of land left by an unknown donor, and the dividends of £80 stock, derived from money left by the Rev. Joseph Avery, in 1719.

WALTON, the third parish, with its town perched on the sea cliffs, has grown into one of the most pleasant watering-places on the coast. A century ago it was a dreary tract, the resort of smugglers, and a point upon which the sea was making rapid inroads. Houses and fields, and even its church, have, in fact, been carried away by the waves, the foundations of the latter being at times visible far out in the waters. Modern energy and enterprise have changed the whole character of the place. A neat little new church has arisen, and the land has been protected from the further ravages of the sea. Excellent hotels, terraces, and villas have been built. A handsome pier has been provided. Altogether, its bracing air, with its fine beach and bold open sea; its pleasing walks, its brick octagonal building on the Naze, rising to the height of 80 feet, and from its summit affording splendid views inland and to seaward; its martello tower, a remnant of the old war, on the north; and the rich fossil treasures of its cliffs, it forms a summer resort as picturesque as it is becoming popular. Mr. T. Wilmshurst, in an interesting description of the place and its productions, says—

"The cliffs of Walton abound in the vestiges of a former state of this planet. In consequence of the crumbling nature of the cliffs, here termed "Antediluvian," these vestiges are laid bare to the eye, and fossil shells are always to be found, either projecting from the cliff, from which some ponderous mass has been recently detached, or strewn upon the beach. In the private collection of the late Mr. John Brown, F.G.S., of Stauway, is deposited the tusk of a mammoth; it is eight feet long, and 24 inches in circumference, and was found here on the beach, between high and low water marks. The shells are found generally in excellent preservation, among which are the *terebratula*, about one and a half inches long and thick, nearly oval, roughly striated transversely, and having a large foramen defined by a distinct border. The fossil oyster, or *ostrea deformis*, and the reversed whelk, *murex contrarius*, also furnish abundant specimens. Copperas stone, or pyrites of iron, as also 'coproliths,' are found upon the beach, and provide employment for many poor people in their collection. The copperas was formerly manufactured in Walton, but is now sent to London for that purpose. The ground on which the old copperas works stood is sufficiently apparent, an almost indelible mark being attached to it. The coproliths are small brown looking pebbles, and are valuable for manure, containing as they do about 50 per cent of phosphate of lime. On the north and north-west of Walton lies a comparatively inland sea, formed by a series of creeks, extending from a spot called Stone Point, about five miles along the northern shore. Many small vessels may be here observed dredging for the young oyster, or "spat," as it is termed; which is thence conveyed to the celebrated oyster beds of the River Colne, where they in due time arrive at maturity."

The charities consist of 10 acres of land given by John Sadler, in 1563, and Thomas Goulding, in 1582; and 25 acres by unknown donors; a rent-charge of £2, out of Pulpit field, purchased with money left by Charles Stevens, in 1613; an acre adjoining, given by an unknown donor in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and four cottages built on the site of ancient almshouses which fell down in 1843.

## Borough of Colchester.

This borough, in point of population, trade, and income by far the most important in the county, contains the following sixteen parishes:—those in roman type are within, and those in *italic* without, the ancient walls.

Parishes.	Probable Origin of Names.	Population in 1801.	Population in 1851.	Assessed to Borough Rate.	Value of Benedice.
<i>Berechurch</i> .....	A church in the corn fields .....	126	120	£. s. d. 1164 0 0	£. 110
St. Botolph.....	Patron saints .....	1706	3000	6335 10 0	148
St. Giles .....		1106	2443	5599 10 0	250
St. Mary-at-the- Walls .....		975	1496	5909 0 0	255
Holy Trinity .....		425	798	1619 0 0	150
<i>Lexden</i> .....	<i>Lessa</i> , less; <i>den</i> , a valley .....	697	1603	6052 0 0	700
St. Martin .....	Patron saint .....	677	942	1344 3 6	150
<i>S. Michael, Mile E.</i>	Being a mile from Colchester ...	299	870	2851 15 0	690
St. Peter.....	Patron saints .....	1358	2093	4127 3 3	280
St. Runwald .....		379	324	1532 0 0	140
All Saints .....	Patron saints .....	362	477	2249 15 0	275
St. Nicholas .....		656	959	2327 6 0	145
St. James .....		1058	1845	3379 5 0	160
<i>Greenstead</i> .....	A green uncultivated place .....	309	751	2410 10 0	293
St. Mary Magdalen }	Patron saints .....	537	433	525 0 0	317
St. Leonard..... }		650	1295	2165 0 0	140

The history of Colchester in the earlier ages belongs to that of the county, and we have already traced it in our political narrative from the little stockade of the ancient Britons, raised as a protection for themselves and their cattle in the forest, to a great seat of Roman power, a thriving Saxon burgh, and a town over which the great Norman, Eudo Dapifer, after having its government committed to his hands, threw his protecting and patronizing shield, raising it in prosperity and adorning it with many noble buildings. We have seen its corporation entertaining sovereigns; its inhabitants stirred by the religious and political animosities of the times, and sustaining siege after siege, down to the last disastrous one of Fairfax, which ended with that sad scene of butchery in the Castle-bailey. As, from the high ground near the railway station, we look upon the town, clothing with its houses the opposite eminence, which rises gradually to the height of 112 feet above the Colne, these great events flash like an electric vision before us, till we see it rising gradually from the dust and desolation in which the civil wars had left it, but staggering at the work beneath the smiting of the plague, which raged here in 1665 and 1666, carrying off 4,731 persons—about half of the population—while a market is established at Weeley, because the countrymen who have food to sell fear to enter the death-tainted town; and collections are made for the suffering inhabitants in all the churches of the metropolis. Colchester was left fearfully weakened by this visitation. Again, however, it lifts its head, and flourishes under the stimulus given to it by the cloth-weaving or bay and say trade, introduced by the Flemings. It survives even the decay of this, once regarded as the staple of its support; and now we find it the handsomest and we conclude one of the most flourishing towns, as it is the most populous in the county: in the coming process of numbering its people they will probably be found to exceed 30,000.



11. 11. 11. 11. 11.

As we descend from the station, we pass that noble charity, the Essex Hall Idiot Asylum, originally built at great expense, for the purpose of a first-rate hotel; but, failing as a hostelry, it has been converted into a hospital, in which children from the Eastern Counties are comfortably housed, and many of them redeemed from the living death of idiocy. As we enter the borough, we look with a feeling of almost reverence upon a town which existed before the Christian era, and was a place of importance and a seat of power when nearly all the rest of the county was a wilderness. As we glance down its main streets, however, we see in its elegant shops, hotels, and public buildings, the freshness and taste of the present day mingled with the memories of the past. Many changes and improvements have been made in the course of the last fifty years. The venerable but dark and dreary old Moot-hall, built by Eudo Dapifer, and in which the fathers of the borough had for centuries assembled in council, was demolished about 1844, and upon its site has risen a new Town-hall—an elegant stone building, the front forming a Roman-Doric pilastrade of six pilasters, with a rusticated basement, the facade surmounted by a bold Doric cornice and balustrade. The cost was £6,000, of which £4,000 was raised by subscription, and the other £2,000 was paid out of the borough funds. The market near the Cups Hotel, for meat, poultry, and vegetables, was provided in 1813, at an outlay of £10,000, but trade obstinately refused to come to it, and it was a loss to the speculators. The old Dutch Bay Hall, at the top of High-street, in which the Flemings and their successors met and did business when the cloth manufacture flourished in the town, has disappeared, and in its stead is a modern building, erected in 1820, and the basement of which was the only corn market till 1846. It was then found inadequate for the trade, and the new Corn Exchange near by was erected, at the cost of £4,000, raised by shares. Carved on the window sill of one of the houses in High-street, a date was discovered some years ago, which appeared to be "1090," and, as many of the inner parts of the building had ancient arched passages and other signs of ancient grandeur about it, a fierce controversy arose amongst antiquarians, some contending this was one of the veritable houses raised by Eudo Dapifer. The house had been nearly rebuilt; and the probable solution is, that the builder had put down the date from some vague tradition, or that the first "0" was an old-fashioned "4," the crossed bottom of which had been knocked off or worn away, and thus the real date was 1490. The streets of the borough are well paved and lighted, this duty being carried out, not by the corporation, but a body of commissioners appointed under acts, the first of which passed in 1623, and the last in 1847, for the improvement of the town and navigation, under which they levy paving and lamp rates in the town, and coal and tonnage dues in the port, which includes the Colne and its creeks, the part of the coast from St. Osyth point, N.N.E. to Walton, and eastward to Tollesbury Point. The inhabitants are well supplied with water by a company which draws it chiefly from a fine spring in Cheswell Meadow, St. Mary's parish,—the ancient source, whence water was first brought into the town in 1536.

That Colchester was the Roman Camulodunum we have already assumed. Nor need we pause to re-argue the question. If, after comparing the historical records with its position—after glancing over the vestiges of the once stupendous earthworks at Lexden, which

enclosed the Roman camp, and extended far around the south and west, and at the Roman bricks and tiles everywhere built into the ancient edifices of the town itself—any antiquarian should have a doubt upon the subject, it must be dispelled by the Roman relics deposited in the Castle Museum; the group of cinerary urns, with a magnificent gladiatorial vase, found by Mr. Taylor, at West Lodge; the imperial coins found in the neighbourhood, as we may instance in the rich cabinet of that indefatigable collector, Mr. J. Bryant; and above all by the recent industrious researches and able elucidations of Dr. Duncan, who has traced the cloaca of one of their noble villas, and with graphic pen brought before us a picture of Roman life and luxury; who has identified the sites of their great cemeteries, traced their roads, piled up their coins, and pointed out their footsteps everywhere in the town and around its suburbs, in a manner which incontestably proves this must have been the great seat of the imperial power, and the scene of Boadicea's massacre.

The ancient WALLS, of which interesting relics yet remain, though in many parts crumbled into ruins—in some parts wreathed in concealing ivy, in others obscured by houses built in front of or upon them—were no doubt originally planned and built by the Roman conqueror when he had decided on settling in this part of the land; though the Saxon and the Norman, and subsequently the burgesses, when the safe keeping of the town came into their hands, have by frequent rebuildings and repairs almost obliterated the work of the original architect. The foundations, however, seem to have been preserved, and the space which they enclose of 118 acres, 1 rood, and 22 perches, may be taken as representing the extent of the city of Camulodunum. The remains are found to consist of the stone procured on the eastern coast, mixed with Roman bricks and laid in a strong cement. Morant says they were faced with Roman bricks, or squared stones, but there are no appearances of this at the present day. The general thickness was seven or eight feet; but at the seven gates and posterns, where attack was most to be apprehended, the strength was increased. From Head-Gate, the scene of one of the fierce attacks of the Parliamentarians, to the eastward, the wall runs along the rear of the houses in Gutter-street, on the left, on the side of a steep acclivity, so that the houses in Sir Isaac's Walk above are on a level with the ruins. At the spot where an ascent of steps leads to the upper street, stood the Schere-gate, or south postern. From thence it extends along the back of the houses and buildings in Black-boy-lane to the end of Botolph-street. Here stood St. Botolph's Gate, which was pulled down 42 years ago. Proceeding along the left-hand side of More-lane, where there were several small round forts, the wall made an angle, and ran to the top of East Hill up to East Gate, which, from the damage it sustained in the siege, fell down in 1651. From the opposite side of this street it skirted the site of the old Crutched Friary and the late Botanic Garden, now converted into building ground, and thus reached the meadows on the north of the town, where, at the angle, the ditch commences which ran along the greater part of the north and west. On this side stood the Rye or River Gate. For some distance a foot-path runs along the top of the old wall, and then, mingling with the houses, the ruins extend to the bottom of North-hill, and the site of North Gate, on the foundations of which houses had been built, which were taken down in 1823 to widen the road. From the foot of North hill the wall passed



on to Balcerne-lane, where it made an angle, and climbing the steep ascent, the present lane having apparently formed the ditch, was connected with a fort or bastion. Picturesque patches of the wall appear here and there as we ascend the hill. From the commanding position of this spot, and the character of the interesting remains which still occupy it—part of the gateway at the head of the Roman road, and fragments of the strong bastion—there is no doubt this was an important point from the earliest ages of the infant town. The name by which it was formerly known was Coltynge Castle—a corruption of the castle of King Coel, from which the inference has been drawn that here the ruler of the district had his chief defensive works. Probably it was here the ancient Britons formed their first ditch and drove the stakes of their first stockade; and that it became a stronghold of their successors is testified by the number of Roman bricks found in the ruins, not scattered amongst other materials as they appear in most of the ancient buildings of the town, but in masses as originally laid. A slim modern public-house now stands within the remnant of the fort, in strange contrast with the olden associations of the place, and another part of the relic has been devoted to still baser uses. From the Balkan, where the fosse terminated, the wall runs to the West Postern, leading through St. Mary's churchyard, now marked by the flight of stone steps; and descending the hill, passed to the south-west, where it made an angle and joined up to Head-gate, thus completing the circuit.

The CASTLE stands a little on the north side of the High-street, with its venerable walls embrowned and battered by time, and part of the surrounding castle yard converted into a garden. Legends of the place tell us that this once stronghold of the town stands on the site of King Coel's palace, and was therefore the birth-place of Helen, and the home in which was nursed to maturity that beauty which disarmed the hand and led captive the heart of the Roman general. If not the palace, probably some other important public building stood here—possibly, as it has been stoutly and seriously maintained, the Temple of Claudius. Some antiquarians of good authority believe that the present castle itself was Roman. We cannot coincide with them. Like the walls, the foundations may have been laid by that people, but the superstructure is the work of other hands. The present gateway is decidedly Norman; and though there are abundance of Roman bricks in the building, and here and there traces of a Roman style, the most reasonable conclusion to which we can come is, that the whole was erected after the Conquest, when Eudo Dapifer was made governor, and became the protector of the town. In the days of the battle-axe and the bow, and even after cannon began to grow formidable, it must have been regarded as a place of great strength. The walls, which extend 140 feet on the east and west sides, and 102 feet on the north and south, were flanked at the corners by strong square towers, with a semicircular fort on the eastern face, and a sally port on the south. The entrance near the south-west tower was defended by a portcullis; and if we pass under the strong semicircular Norman arch we shall find that the walls are 30 feet thick at the foundations, 12 feet at the lower story, and about 11 at the upper. The whole building rested upon a sort of platform of massive arches, thus forming a series of large vaults—unused, as there was no access to them; but which were broken into some years since by a Goth who was ransacking the old

pile in search of plunder. The outworks of the castle have all disappeared. The ditch and rampart on the east and north have been taken into the garden of Mrs. Round, and, with the dull walk of the olden military sentinel, been converted into terraces and pleasant parterres. A row of houses, facing High-street, occupy the site of the southern wall. The interior, too, has greatly suffered. The quadrangular space has long been roofless, though it was once filled with a series of apartments. Strong interior walls enclosed a gallery, communicating with the principal rooms in the upper part, some of which still remain, and are reached by a passage over a vault near the entrance. The brick arches on the left are, however, modern. Traversing this passage we find in the south-east tower an apartment till lately used as a public and petty session room, and in which the works of Archbishop Harnett's library are deposited. Near by is the old chapel of the castle, whose venerable walls and strongly arched roof have lately been restored at the expense of C. Gray Round, Esq., and it is now fitted up as the Museum of the Corporation and the Archæological Society—the appropriate depository of the beautiful Vint bronzes, and of the antiquarian treasures which the soil about Colchester so richly furnishes. This chapel is 47 feet long, and at the parts where the windows cut through the thick walls, about 40 feet in breadth. On the ground floor beneath, opening on the ruined quadrangle, is the little arched, dark, and dismal room in which Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle were lodged the night before they were led out to receive their death shots. If we ascend to the top of the wall, and traverse the ramparts, still passable, to the north-west tower, and descend a flight of steps deep into the solid brick-work, we enter a narrow cell, with a niche in the wall for the brown loaf and the water-jar, and a stone bench at the end for the victims it received. This, it is said, was the death scene of James Parnell, a quaker, who, when persecution laid its heavy hand on his then novel sect, was locked up here and perished of starvation—not intentionally we conclude; but a religious recusant was of so little consequence, that when the key of his lone cell, from which no groan of agony could escape, was once turned, he was forgotten; and when the door was afterwards opened, he was seen by the dim light from yonder loop-hole, lying on the floor an emaciated corpse.

The castle does not figure very prominently in the conflicts of Colchester. At first it appears to have been in the king; but in 1214 John granted it—with the Hundred of Tendring, with which it has since passed—to Stephen Haringood. After passing through various hands it came to Sir Joseph Northfolk, sergeant-at-arms of the House of Commons. His son, having embarrassed himself by building the range of houses fronting High-street, sold the castle in 1683 to John Weeley, for £105., the object of the purchaser being to demolish the venerable edifice, and make a profit out of the spoil. Happily Mammon was foiled in the speculation, and a part at least of the relic was preserved. Many of the bricks and nearly all the stone of the interior arches were sold; the fine well which supplied the fortress with water was destroyed; the spacious vaults below were cut into and found filled with sand; the summits of the towers and walls were blown up with gunpowder or otherwise thrown down; but the old cement which held the other materials together was too strong for the spoiler, and he retired discomfited from the contest. The building was then sold to Sir Isaac Rebow; and subsequently to Charles Gray, Esq.,

who threw the circular roof over the south western tower to preserve it from the sapping of the wet. From him it has descended to Charles Gray Round, Esq., of Birch Hall, who, with a spirit that can appreciate the value of what remains of the building, has taken measures to preserve the interesting relic of the old town.

**CORPORATION AND CHARTERS.**—The foundations of self-government were certainly laid in the town at a very early date. We can understand that to a place like this the Saxons would delegate large powers for the maintenance of order and the administration of justice; and accordingly we find that the corporate body, though then in its swaddling clothes, held property and possessed special privileges, long before it was constituted by formal charter. Of the nature of these privileges, and the mode of electing the local rulers, however, we have no account till after the coming of the Norman. Cromwell says:—

“The major part of Colchester was in the crown in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and consequently under William I.: under the latter monarch its civil government was probably committed to a Port-reeve, who, doubtless, was a Norman. Either by the tyranny of the officer and his dependents, or by the immediate acts of the king, numerous inhabitants of the burgh had their estates condemned and their persons outlawed: notwithstanding which, and though the lands of these victims lay waste, the taxes were as rigorously exacted as when all was in its former state of cultivation and improvement. From which specimens of the blessings of Norman authority it may be rationally inferred that the townsmen of Colchester, at least, considered themselves as treated like a conquered people. In common amongst the burgesses (according to Domesday Book), there were eighty acres of land and eight perches round the walls, of all which the burgesses had sixty shillings a year for the king’s service, if need were; if not, to be divided in common. And the custom was for the king’s burgesses to pay yearly, fifteen days after Easter, two marks of silver, which belonged to the king’s ferm. Likewise 6d. a year out of each house; which might be employed either for the maintenance of the king’s soldiers, or for an expedition of sea or land; and it was to be paid whether the king had soldiers or undertook an expedition. For which sixpences the whole city paid, in King Edward’s time, in lieu of all debts, £15. 15s. 8d. a-year. Of which the moneyers (or coiners), paid in the time of King Edward, £4; but in that of the survey, four-score pounds and four quarts of honey, or forty shillings and fourpence: besides 100 shillings fine to the sheriff, and 10s. 8d. for the maintenance of prebendaries.”

The burgesses had the privilege of coining money, for which they paid a certain sum annually, at one time £20, at another £10, but in one instance the bishop’s tenant demanded £40. Under William Rufus the town began to revive. At the solicitation of the inhabitants Eudo Dapifer was appointed governor; and we are told that—

“Placed under Norman government, we have reason to believe that Colchester very speedily and conspicuously improved in point of architectural decoration. The castle, the original foundation of most of the existing churches, and frequent and costly reparations of the walls, are all with justice ascribed to Norman ascendancy. Some public edifices and mansions for the wealthy were also reared, in a style previously unbeheld, and probably unconceived of, by the more simple Saxon inhabitants.”

In the reign of Henry I. the burgesses held the customs of the river Colne, and of the wharves on either side; and these were confirmed to them during the rule of Henry II. on proof of the validity of their title made on oath before the justices itinerant—or after what would now be called a trial at the assizes. In this reign Colchester was let to the burgesses in fee ferm, at a rent of £42, and out of this arose the right in the property of the corporation—they became, in fact, lords of the royal demesne. Richard I., in the first year of his reign, (December 6, 1189), granted the first charter to the borough, and

considerably extended the rights which it appears to have previously possessed. By this charter the burgesses had liberty to choose bailiffs for their government, and a justice to hold pleas of the crown, no one being called on to plead out of the walls of the borough; they were to be free from scot and lot (public impositions or contributions); danegeld, (the money paid as black-mail to the Danes, and afterwards continued as a tax); and fine for murder (the fine in those times imposed upon a place in which a murder was committed.) If summoned before the judges itinerant—or judges of assize—they might be acquitted by four creditable men of the burgh, none being allowed to clear themselves by duel; and if any burgess were impleaded in a plea of the crown he should be discharged on making oath that he had been indicted in the burgh. None of the royal family or any other were to be lodged by force within the walls of the burgh; and the burgesses were to be exempt all over England and the sea-ports from toll, lartage (a sum paid for showing goods at fairs, markets, &c.), passage (money paid for persons or goods passing shores, landing places, &c.), portage (the toll for passing over bridges with horses, &c., or under them with boats), and all other customs at all times and in all places. No burgess was to be amerced in a pecuniary sum except for his weere—the 100 shillings then paid for a murder—for which he should be indicted at no other than the Hundred or other court within the burgh. They were to have all their lands, debts, and securities, whoever owed them; and “if any person took toll or custom from them, the burgesses should take from that city, burgh, or town in which the toll or custom had been taken, as much as the burgess of Colchester had given for toll, or according to the damage he had suffered.” The burgesses had the right to sue within the borough their debtors residing elsewhere; and it was provided “if they (the debtors) refused to pay it, and did not come to Colchester to prove they owed it not, the burgesses to whom anything was due should take a distress from that county in which the debtor dwelt, until he satisfied the debt, or proved at Colchester by due course of law that he owed nothing.” No forester was to molest any one within the liberty; but all the burgesses might hunt, within the liberty of Colchester, the fox, the hare, and the polecat. The fishing was given them from the North-bridge as far as West Ness; and whoever possessed the land adjoining the burgesses were to have the customs of the water and banks on both sides, to enable them to pay their fee-ferm; and finally it was declared that Colchester market should not be hindered by any other market.

This was the foundation of the settled rights of the borough, which were recognized, confirmed, and extended by various subsequent charters. For instance, Henry III. gave the burgesses the return of all writs in matters concerning the liberties of the town. A charter of Edward II. explained the rights as to pleading within the borough, granted a fair to commence the day before St. Dennis' and last eight days; and exempted the burgesses “for ever from meerage (money collected for the repair of the walls, or horses and carts passing through a town), picage (the sum charged for breaking the ground to set up booths and stalls at fairs), and paage (or passage money). Edward III., Richard II., Henry IV., and Henry V. confirmed these rights, the latter defining and explaining the nature of the pleas of which the governing body was to have cognizance, in order, as the charter stated, “for avoiding all ambiguities and disputes.” Henry VI. also explained

at some length the points as to holding of pleas, and added that the burghers at the time of the election of bailiffs according to ancient custom, might choose four of the most worthy and discreet persons of the town to be, jointly with the bailiffs, justices of the peace for one whole year, and to possess the same powers as the other justices had in any place in England, the county justices being at the same time prohibited from acting within the borough. He also granted them all fines, and the goods of felons, fugitives, and outlaws, and the goods of persons who committed suicide, "wheresoever found within the said town, liberty, suburbs, or precincts of the same." Further, the steward, marshall, or clerk of the king's household, or his admiral, were not to enter the town of Colchester; and the bailiffs were to have full power to inquire of all matters concerning the office of clerk of the market. Edward IV., too, gave a long confirmatory and explanatory charter, incorporating the ruling body by the title of "The Bailiffs and Commonalty of the Burgh of Colchester," and providing for the election of a Common Council; and the document set forth that he did so because—"The Burgh of Colchester was one of the most ancientest burghs in the kingdom of England; that it is seated near the sea-coasts to oppose the attempts of his enemies that were disposed to invade the kingdom; and remembering the very great faithfulness and loyalty of the burgesses of that burgh, both to himself and his predecessors, kings of England." The following definition of the boundaries of the borough was laid down:—

"In order to remove all manner of ambiguity, doubt, or difficulty, concerning the four hamlets and the fishery, he granted to the bailiffs and the commonalty, and their successors for ever, the said four hamlets of Lexden, Milend, Grymsted, and Donyland, and the water and river from the North-bridge of this burgh as far as Westness, together with the banks on each side of the said river, and all the creeks belonging and adjoining to the said water, within the precinct aforesaid, as parcel of the liberty of this burgh: so that no person of what degree or condition soever, might, without the will and licence of the bailiffs and commonalty, and their successors, make wharfs or cranes on the banks of the river or places aforesaid; or wears, kiddells, and engines for catching of fish; or fish in the same water; or presume to sell or buy any merchandizes in vessels coming up the said water (provisions only for people's households excepted) but at the New Hythe, upon pain of forfeiting the merchandizes and the vessels or boats wherein they should be bought or sold."

The sheriffs and coroners of the county were forbidden to intermeddle in the affairs of the borough; and the charter concluded with a grant of the following additional privileges, of great importance at that period:—

"That no person dwelling and residing within this burgh, liberty, and precinct, should be put or impanneled against his will, in any assizes, inquests, attainments, or recognizances whatsoever, out of the same burgh, liberty, and precinct; nor be appointed assessor, taxer, or collector without the same, of tenths, fifteenths, or other tollages, impositions, or subsidies whatsoever, granted to the king, or his heirs, or of any part thereof, or collector of a reasonable aid to make the king's eldest son a knight, or marry his eldest daughter; nor be chosen constable or bailiff, or compelled to be in any other office or employment against his will, out of the burgh, liberty, and precinct aforesaid; and be no way liable to any fine or forfeiture for refusing to take upon him those offices."

Other charters of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. followed, the latter granting Kings-wood or heath to the town, and recognizing the two coroners, who had been elected from the time of Henry IV. Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., gave confirmatory charters; but there being a *quo warranto* against that of the latter



monarch, he, on petition, issued a second, by which it was provided that the governing body should consist of a mayor and nine aldermen, 16 assistants, 16 common-councilmen (four from each ward) a high steward, and a recorder; amongst other things this further right was granted—

“That no foreigner (one who was not free of the burgh) shall for the future use any mestery, occupation, or manual trade within this burgh, and the liberty and precinct of it, nor buy or sell within the same, except in the fairs, and at fair time, any merchandizes or goods, unless victuals by retail; and that either the buyer or seller be a free-burgess.”

Both Cromwell and his son tried their hands at Colchester charters; and Charles II. issued two, in the latter of which began the tampering with the independent rights of Corporations, which distinguished, or rather disgraced, this and the succeeding reign—power being reserved to the crown to remove the officers at any time by an order of privy council. James II. went even further, reserving not only the right to put out the officers, but to put others in their places by royal mandate—thus rendering the corporation the mere tool and creature of the king. The revolution, however, set all to rights. King William, in 1693, restored the ancient rights and privileges of the borough. Twice since then the Corporation has been assailed by *quo warranto*—the first time in 1741, when the officers disclaimed and surrendered their rights without a fight, and the charter lay dead till its renewal under the Great Seal, in 1763. Again, in 1818, judgments of ouster were obtained, to remedy which a renewal charter was granted by George III. From this period, down to the time when the Municipal Reform Act broke into the close corporations and turned them into popular bodies, the town government was constituted of a mayor, high steward, recorder, four justices, eleven aldermen (besides the mayor, who was to be one), a town clerk, eighteen assistants, eighteen common-councilmen, a chamberlain, two coroners, four clavers, four high-constables, four sergeants-at-mace, a water-bailiff, crier, borough gaoler, corn inspector, treasurer, inspector of hides, clerk of the market, and billet-master. Under the new order of things the borough was divided into three wards; and the Corporation is composed of a mayor, six aldermen, and eighteen councillors, with a commission of the peace, a recorder, town clerk, coroner, and other officers. The high steward is retained as an honorary officer under the charters, though not recognized by the act. Besides its chartered rights, Colchester possessed certain prescriptive privileges; it was a Hundred of itself, and had its Hundred courts, which were afterwards succeeded by the quarter session; it had the probate and enrolling of wills, which ceased about 1560; and the burgesses had the right of common on 1020 acres of land round the walls, from Lammas-day, or August 1, till the 2nd of February. This last right was so wretchedly managed, and proved so great an obstruction to the improvement of agriculture, that about 1805 it was sold to the various owners of the lands: and the money thus realized being invested, now produces, with other small items, about £300, which is distributed among poor freemen. The property of the corporation consists of the Severall's estates, at Myland, now yielding £1,277. per annum; chantry lands at Lexden, producing £40.; the market tolls, let at £215.; the Colne oyster fishing, yielding £736.; floating fish £15.; and rents of moorings £12., making the total income of the corporation, independent of rates, £2,295. 10s. The rates are



£1,653.—at 8d. in the pound, the average of the last seven years—making the total annual expenditure of the borough about £4,000.

The MARKET from which the tolls are derived is of very ancient date. That it existed before the charter of Richard I. is evident from the terms in which it is confirmed by that document. In these records, however, no days are mentioned for holding it. In fact, it appears that anciently there was a market daily; in the last century the markets were held on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, besides another once a fortnight on Tuesdays, principally for wool. The great market of the borough is now on Saturday—the day on which it is authorized to be held by the charter of William III. ; and to such dimensions has it grown that it is found to encumber the busy High-street, and active measures are being taken to remove it to the suburbs—an experiment that was once tried, by its removal to Lord's Ground, on the west of the town; but it was afterwards brought back on the petition of the inhabitants. There have also been grants of five fairs in the town—First: Midsummer, or St. John's Green Fair, granted by Eudo Dapifer to St. John's Abbey, to last four days—now held on the 5th of July. Second: "Scalt Codlin Fair," granted by Richard I., in 1189, to the lepers of St. Mary Magdalen's Hospital, to be held on the eve and feast of their patron saint. Third: "St. Dennis's Fair," granted to the corporation by Edward II., in 1318, to commence on the eve of St. Dennis, and last six days (reduced to four by the charter of Charles I.) Fourth: "New Fair," granted by William and Mary, in 1693, to the corporation, to commence on the 12th of July, and continue three days. Fifth: The Tailors' Fair," so called because it was granted to the borough by a charter of King William, in 1699, incorporating the tailors of Colchester; it was to last four days, commencing the second Tuesday in April, but has now been discontinued.

The OYSTER FISHERY of the Colne is one of the most ancient, and as seen above, one of the most valuable possessions of the corporation. The fame of the Colchester natives dates back to a period of which written history is silent. Nay, it has even been hinted that their high character brought the Romans as invaders to this island. Suetonius says that the hope of getting pearls, which grew in a particular kind of oyster, was the inducement to their coming; and an old poet (Cokan) has carried the matter even further. He says—

"The old luxurious Romans vaunt did make,  
Of gustful oysters took in Lucerne lake;  
Your Essex better hath, and such perchance,  
As tempted Cæsar first to pass from France."

There is some evidence that the delicious little natives of the Pyefleet were eaten by gourmands in Rome before the Christian era with as much relish as they are now devoured at the annual oyster feast of the borough—a good test of their quality, which has thus stood proof against the varying tastes and fashions of 2,000 years. The burgesses, we have seen, had this fishery by the charter of Richard I. Even then it was a confirmation of an ancient right. This was further confirmed to them by other charters; but they have often been compelled to do battle in its defence. Lionel de Bradenham, the lord of the manor of Lagenhoe, enclosed part of the river, and appropriated it to himself in the reign of Edward III. When baffled by law he besieged Colchester, and attempted to burn the town. Ultimately he was compelled to sue for pardon, and retired from the contest a ruined

man. The Earl of Oxford actually obtained a grant of the fishery from Henry VI.; but he was beaten in two trials at law, and his letters patent were cancelled. Sir Roger Townsend, lord of Wivenhoe manor, in 1629-30, endeavoured to lay hands on a portion of the property, on the ground that the West-ness of the charter was a point against his land, and not at St. Osyth; he, too, was defeated. Subsequent attacks have been made; and the last trial upon the subject took place in 1846, when the Court of Queen's Bench affirmed the right of the Corporation to the fishing, subject to the right of the public to use the river as a highway. The oyster fishery is now worked by the Colne River Company, formed in 1807, constituted of the associated fishermen who reside at Brightlingsea, Wivenhoe, and Rowhedge, who pay two guineas each for their licenses to the corporation, a court for that purpose being held annually on the last Monday in February. There are 360 of them, so that, independent of the sum it yields to the corporation, large numbers of families depend upon this fishery, which from the manner in which it is protected, and the industry of the dredgers, has increased £150 per annum to the borough in the last twenty years. The fishermen dredge for the spat, or young oyster brood, in the neighbouring waters; it is taken to the layings of the Colne, and in two or three years attains a saleable size. The value of the stock of this spat in the river is estimated at a very considerable sum; and the worth of oysters annually sold from these layings varies, according to the season, from £3,000 to £10,000.

The port of Colchester is at the Hythe, below the town to the eastward, up to which point the Colne is navigable for vessels of 160 tons; but Wivenhoe and other points within its limits are accessible to ships of much larger burthen; and a considerable trade is carried on. So important was the port considered in ancient days, that though it is eight or nine miles from the sea, the chief magistrate of the town was called a port-reeve. The Old Hythe has been unused for centuries.

The right of returning members to parliament belongs to Colchester by prescription. There is not the slightest mention of it in any of the charters; but it has been exercised since the 23rd of Edward I.—three years before even the city of London sent representatives to the great council of the nation. As wages were to be paid to the members, the borough was on a few occasions exempted from the return as from a heavy burthen—once to enable them to repair the walls; but the list is nearly unbroken down to our own time. The rights of the freemen were acquired by birth, servitude, and creation. The latter led to great disputes and abuses. On one occasion the assembly passed a resolution that freedoms should be put up for sale; and no doubt the rights which they gave under the charters, of being exempted from imposts on goods and merchandise throughout England and its ports, rendered them very saleable commodities. From the reign of James II. to the loss of the charter in 1742, men were content to pay from £3. to £10. for admission; but these abuses led to frequent conflicts and parliamentary petitions. The number of freemen at the time of the passing of the Reform Bill was about 1,500, of whom two-thirds were non-resident. The present number of voters on the register is, freemen 434; £10. householders, 880; total 1,314. The number of municipal voters on the burgess roll is 2,510.

ST. JOHN'S ABBEY.—This, the most magnificent of the monastic establishments of ancient Colchester, was planted on the pleasant

eminence to the south, outside the walls, at the head of what is now known as St. John's Green. At the close of the Saxon dominion this was a spot of great sanctity and repute. Siric, a priest, had formed a sort of hermitage here, and a wooden church had risen up to shelter the devotion of pilgrim visitors, attracted by the fame and miracles of the place. Heavenly lights were said to illumine the edifice in the darkness of the wintry night; angel voices were heard singing within its walls, when no human worshipper was there. These wonders attracted the attention of Eudo Dapifer, the great Norman, and he resolved on building a monastery on the spot regarded, according to the feelings of the time, with so much reverence in the district. He commenced his work in 1096, and in the following year laid the first stone of the abbey.\* When the place became habitable he brought two monks from Rochester to form the nucleus of the brotherhood. In those days, however, as at the present time, there were wranglings and disputes among holy men and their patrons about worldly matters. The two dainty monks complained of their fare, and returned to their own convent. Two others succeeded no better; and the work appeared a failure. Eudo even repented of his project. Afterwards the abbot of York sent him thirteen monks of the Benedictine order, who, by their devotion, their care of the poor, and their hospitality to travellers, won the good will of the district. From this time the abbey grew apace; the number of monks was increased to twenty; the first abbot was elected in 1104; the church was completed and consecrated, and the house was largely endowed on the occasion by grants laid upon the altar. Eudo further bequeathed to the monastery the manor of Brightlingsea, and £100, a gold ring with a topaz, a standing cup with a cover adorned with plates of gold, with his horse and mule; and when he died he was brought from Normandy and buried in the abbey on the 28th February, 1120. The abbey was endowed by the founder with various manors, amongst them those of Weeley, Pitsea, and Hallingbury; tithes in Hallingbury, Takeley, Witham, Stanway, Lexden, and other parishes in Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdon; lands and a mill in Colchester; the churches of St. Mary Westcheap, St. Stephen's Walbrook, and others. These possessions were largely added to by subsequent benefactors; and the abbey had the right of sanctuary—that is, of protecting from the law any criminal who fled to it for shelter. In the succeeding ages the abbot of St. John's was one of the mighty ecclesiastics of the land. He wore a mitre, and had a seat in the upper house of parliament along with the barons of the kingdom. He and his house were exempt from all episcopal jurisdiction; they were entitled to the same honour, liberty, and laws as the church of St. Peter, at Westminster; and amongst other rights and immunities had the power of determining causes in all the lands adjoining the monastery. Thus dignified and armed with temporal as well as spiritual power, the proud churchman sought to override the humbler burgesses by encroachments upon their privileges; and frequent disputes and conflicts between the abbey and the town were the consequence. The last abbot, John Riche, was amongst the few who had the spirit to stand up and resist the Eighth Henry. Though sixteen of the monks submitted, he sternly refused to acknowledge the king's supremacy or to surrender his convent; and was hanged at Greenstead. When the abbey and its revenues thus came

into the hands of the crown by the strangulation of the chief proprietor, they were stated at £523. 17s. 9d., which must have been far below their real value—as was indeed the case in respect of most of the suppressed monasteries. The abbey and its site were granted to Sir Thomas Darcy, and were afterwards sold to the Lucas family, who converted the buildings into a noble seat. It continued their residence down to Cromwell's time, but suffered greatly in the civil wars, being first plundered by a puritan mob, and afterwards occupied, during the siege, by the troops of Fairfax, who, when they left Sir Charles Lucas a corpse, left also the house of his family a ruin. Time has completed the work of desolation, and scarcely a stone of the ancient abbey is left. Tradition has forgotten where its church stood, but it is generally believed to have been on the south-east; and a drawing of it which has been preserved in the Cottonian library represents it as in the form of a cross, with a low square turreted tower at the intersection of the transepts with the nave and chancel. This tower had a short spire in the centre, and four others at the corners, each surrounded with a ball and cross. At the south-west corner was a round tower, bearing a strong resemblance to a castle keep; but the impression which this view of the church leaves is, that it was inferior to that in which the humbler and less wealthy monks of St. Botolph worshipped. Of the abbey itself not even an outline has been preserved. There is, indeed, a beautiful gateway still standing, its front richly ornamented with carved work, angels, and other figures surmounting the portals; and we cannot look without feelings of veneration upon the crocketed pinnacles and niches elegantly canopied; but from the style, and also from the material, which is of hewn stone and flint, without any admixture of Roman bricks, which marks all the ancient buildings in the town, this was evidently erected four or five hundred years after the foundation of the abbey. The beautiful relic we found defiled by being made a receptacle for hay and rubbish, and the porter's lodge was occupied by some dependent of the nurseryman who cultivated the abbey gardens, the walls of which enclosed fourteen acres; but the property, and the farm adjacent, having been purchased by the government for the erection of cavalry barracks, the modern sabre is to succeed the beads of the ancient monks; the sentinel is to pace the spot where the abbot prayed; but it is hoped the military authorities will have the good taste to spare and restore a relic so interesting to the antiquarian and the town.

**THE PRIORY AND CHURCH OF ST. BOTOLPH.**—This monastic institution was founded in 1116, by Ernulph, a monk, for canons-regular of St. Augustine—the first house of that order established in the kingdom. The founder became the first prior. It appears from their remains that the buildings were principally of Roman brick, taken no doubt from the crumbling buildings which lay ready at hand. The priory soon attracted benefactors, and as it was the first, so it was the chief of its order, being invested with authority over all the other houses in the kingdom, and exempted by a bull from the pope from all other ecclesiastical or secular jurisdiction. Its priors were therefore men of some importance and power in those days; but of the number of canons maintained in it we have no record. At the dissolution its revenues amounted to £113. 12s. 8d. These and the site were secured by Lord Chancellor Audley, who soon alienated them. The priory which stood to the southward fell to decay, and part of its walls have

been built into a neighbouring brewery. The stately church, however, remained, and hither on sabbath days and state occasions the corporation used to resort up to the time of the Commonwealth. It is now a ruin, partly wreathed in ivy, but magnificent in its desolation. To our minds this ruin, with its noble western entrance—a semicircular retiring arch, decorated with mouldings of thin bricks and hewn stone in alternate succession, its three-quarter columns, charged with sculptured foliage, and its double row of interlaced circular arches of Roman brick above the doorway—is one of the most picturesque relics of other days which the borough contains. The church appears to have been 108 feet long,  $25\frac{1}{2}$  feet between the pillars at the nave, and with a passage in the aisles of nearly ten feet. It was lofty in proportion, with walls in some places eight feet and a half in thickness; and it had two stately towers. A part only of the western front, and a fragment of the northern, is all that escaped the beleaguering guns of the parliamentary army of 1648, and the slow corrosion of the two succeeding centuries. History only passes in dim review the fleshless forms of seven centuries; but imagination, as we wander over the venerable ruin, restores by a touch the massive walls and gorgeous trappings. The vesper bell again swings in the church tower; the cowed canons of St. Augustine bend again over their office books; while the old monastery towers like a kingly palace above the town of Colchester, ancient even in those ancient days. Anon, the whirlwind of civil war is sweeping around us. The guns of Fairfax, planted on the high ground toward Wivenhoe, are levelling the old church of St. Botolph, and scattering our path with shattered columns, roofs, and archways. At length the murderous turmoil ceases; the waves roll back; and all that remains of the splendid edifice are these crumbling walls. It is thus the warrior “makes a solitude and calls it peace,” and the weeds now waving undisturbed where once stood the gorgeous altar, are the laurels with which his memory is crowned. But the hour of desolation has passed. After two centuries of domestic quiet, piety has arisen and rebuilt its altar; a noble church, somewhat in the same style, having been erected close by in 1836, principally by subscription. Again the sabbath sacrifice of prayer is duly offered; and again the knee can bend before its Maker fast by its former resting-place, the battered pillars and roofless ruin, whose dim forms are seen through the windows of the new temple, reminding the worshippers of the peace and purity of the present time.

In the days when monasteries and monks were as plenteous in the land as blackberries on the hedge by the way-side, there were of course other religious houses of a minor character in Colchester.

In the parish of St Mary's, in a quiet street, upon which it has left its name, stood the home of a community of crossed, or as they are generally called, crouched friars, of the order of St. Augustine, founded about 1244, by, it is believed, William De Lanvallei, the lord of Stanway, and placed under the government of a prior. The good friars were not so richly endowed as to make them objects of envy, but they were not allowed to rest long in peace. They were frequently invaded and routed from their hive, which at one time became a free chapel or hospital; at another a church, with its appointed rector; and in 1407 it was made the seat of the rich guild of St. Helens, which included several nobles amongst its members, and was empowered to found a chantry of five chaplains and to maintain thirteen



poor men to pray for the king and the brethren and sisters of the fraternity. The friars were thus dispossessed ; but the name of Church was as well known in Colchester then as now, and in the reign of Henry VII., one "Roger Church, an active man," arose and became their champion. He knew something of law, too, for he produced papal bulls and other legal documents which established their rights, and having thus reinstated them he became their prior. The revenues of the house at the dissolution were £7. 7s. 8d., which was swept with the richer spoils into the pouch of Lord Chancellor Audley. The chapel was destroyed at the time ; but the house was partly rebuilt ; and was afterwards the residence of the well-known Sir Harbottle Grimston, till the siege rendered it uninhabitable. At the beginning of the last century it was converted into a workhouse ; afterwards into cottages ; but these were long since pulled down.

In the parish of St. James's, close by East-Gate, and just opposite the church, stood the monastery of the grey friars—so called from the colour of their habit—brethren belonging to the mendicant order, who professed to live partly by their own labour and partly by begging. The house was founded in 1309 by Baron Fitzwalter, who sixteen years after enrolled himself as one of the members, and died there. We do not learn that the home of these monks was remarkable for its architectural splendour. Their earthly possession consisted of a few acres only of land lying near their house, most of which they no doubt cultivated with their own hands ; and at the dissolution, the place and its appendages was sold for £430. 10s. The grey friar's supposed severity of life, however, usually brought them in a good income. They stood in the very highest odour of sanctity with the commonalty ; and as nobles thought much of their passing *requiems*, and eagerly sought burial for their dead within the shadow of their convent walls, largesse, arms, legacies, and offerings of food—their rules forbade them to take money—poured steadily in ; and we may conclude that the brethren of the Friary knew little of fasting as a matter of necessity, however they might profess to practise it as a virtue. The house is down.

If we follow the steps of the religious pilgrim of olden days as he passed from altar to altar and from shrine to shrine, we shall find in St. Helen's-lane a little building which tradition represents as a relic of the patron saint of the town. It is said to have been founded by St. Helen herself. Eudo Dapifer rebuilt it about 1076, and gave it to the Abbey of St. John, conditioning that the monastery should send a chaplain to officiate within it on alternate days. This condition was in time wholly neglected ; and towards the end of the thirteenth century it was changed into a chantry, with certain endowments. At the suppression, Henry VIII. granted it to the authorities of the borough for the purpose of forming a free school from its annual proceeds ; but the bailiffs and burgesses, caring little about education, neglected this duty, and appear to have sold the property. It was at length purchased by the Society of Friends, and was long used as their meeting-house. Time and the tampering of the modern trowel have wholly changed the character of the building, and the antiquarian will find no trace of the work of the Roman saint or the Norman architect.

Crossing East-bridge, and approaching a barn on the south side of the Harwich road, we stand upon the spot to which some religious misanthrope, probably disgusted with the levity and the luxury of the town of Colchester some thousand years ago, retired to nurse his



gloomy feelings, and mutter his prayers and munch his herbs in the solitude of the thick forest. The place became afterwards celebrated as a hermitage. In the reign of Henry III. (about 1220) there is an allowance from the exchequer for "the hermit of St. James' parish." That personage is mentioned in other legal documents. Subsequently, it seems, a chapel in connexion with St. Botolph's Priory, dedicated to St. Anne, was erected here, of which the present building is a remnant; and near by was a sacred spring, still retaining the name of Holy-well, at which the cottagers now dip their water, without much thought of the pilgrims who prayed around its brink or the miracles that were wrought here in ancient days.

Barracks formerly stood on the south side of Magdalen-street, but these were demolished at the close of the French war, and the martial bustle of the place ceased. The camp has again made Colchester an important garrison town.

The pilgrim to Colchester will not depart without a visit to the old churches, but he will be probably disappointed from the idea he has formed of the parochial temples of a town of this importance and antiquity. The foundations and parts of most of them are ancient; but they have been sorely battered by time and war, and the patches of modern repairs give them an incongruous appearance. St. Peter's, which was built by Saxon hands, but was shaken by an earthquake in 1692, is the most spacious and noble, and contains several ancient tombs to the Sayers family, formerly of great importance in the town, on one of which is a long epitaph to the "Worshipful George Sayers," who died in 1577. St. Runwald's, in the centre of the High-street, lay in ruins for a century, but was restored in 1760. The little church of St. Giles also remained in ruins long after the siege; it is of interest from containing the tomb of Lucas and Lisle. Part of St. Nicholas is a wreck still; the tower fell down in 1700, crashing through the roof, and the chancel part has never been restored, the modern end of the smaller edifice showing itself through the roofless and windowless walls. Holy Trinity has a Saxon tower of the 9th or 10th century; the edifice contains the tomb of Dr. Gilbert, physician to Queen Elizabeth and King James I., who died in 1603. All Saints' is a fine building with a tower of flint; and the edifice is now undergoing restoration. In St. James's we find a handsome monument to Alderman Winsley, the founder of the almshouses in St. Botolph's, who died in 1726; he left £250 to be laid out on the monument. The tower of St. Martin's was battered down at the siege, and has never been rebuilt. St. Mary-at-the-Walls, too, bears marks of the same struggle. The repairs of the steeple, the sacred edifice suffering severely (as stated page 142) from the cannon of Fairfax on St. John's Green. In the north aisle is a monumental statue to "John Rebow, of Colchester, merchant," erected by Sir Isaac Rebow to the memory of his father.

The outlying districts of the borough are pleasantly situated. Lexden-road, extending to the westward, is studded with handsome seats and villas. On the south stands the Essex and Colchester Hospital, a good building of white brick, erected by subscription in 1820, and since enlarged. At the head of the staircase is placed a very fine antique sphynx, undoubtedly Roman, which was found in the grounds, two feet beneath the surface, in 1821. The institution is supported by annual subscriptions, donations, and legacies that have been bequeathed to it. Further on, above the delightful village, is Lexden park, the seat of Geo. H. Errington, Esq. This gentleman is the

son of the late George Henry Errington, Esq., of Cotton Hall, Stafford—a younger branch of the Erringtons of Errington, in Northumberland, where the family was seated before the Conquest. The house was rebuilt in 1824-5 by J. F. Mills, Esq.; and Mr. Errington, who married that gentleman's daughter, has greatly improved the grounds, and is enlarging the park. Lexden Springs, with the cool streams and shading trees—a picturesque place of summer resort—and the ramparts or earthworks, now dwindled down to a low ridge—lie to the right as we pass through the village to the hill beyond. This is crowned with the Manor House, the seat of P. O. Papillon, Esq., M.P., eldest son of Thomas Papillon, Esq., of Crowhurst Place, Sussex. He was called to the bar in 1852, and was elected for Colchester in 1859. The family is of French extraction, and finally settled in England after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572, in which a direct lineal progenitor fell a victim. The handsome church was rebuilt in 1821.

Berechurch, or West Donyland, lies to the south. The Hall, the seat of the late Sir George Henry Smyth, was formerly a farm-house, but was converted into a neat brick mansion by Sir Robert Smyth, who laid out good grounds about it. The property now belongs to Thomas White, Esq., who married the heiress of the late baronet.

Of Greensted, on the east, as well as of Mile-end on the north, in which the railway station is situated, Earl De Grey is the lord. The small ancient church of the latter parish is now closed, and near by it a new one has lately been erected. The Severalls estate of the corporation, granted to it by Henry VIII., lies in this parish.

Noble provision has been made in the town, both by ancient grants and modern benevolence, for the education of the people. Foremost stands the Grammar School, which, like many similar institutions in the land, has had fresh life and vigour infused into it within the last few years, by the modernizing of its character and the energy and ability of Dr. Wright, the master. This was the first endowed educational institution in the town. When Henry VIII. despoiled the monastic institutions he granted the revenues of the chantries of the chapel of St. Helen and the church of St. Mary to the corporation, on condition that with part of the proceeds they should found and endow a free school. They took the property, but seem to have very loosely fulfilled the obligation appendant to it. Difficulties and doubts upon the subject existed in the time of Elizabeth, and the letters patent being surrendered, the queen re-granted the property, directing that the sum of at least twenty marks (£13. 6s. 8d.) should be appropriated to the school: the choice of the master was given to the bailiffs and commonalty, and the Bishop of London and the Dean of St. Paul's were appointed visitors. This was in 1584; and ten months after the school was founded, for sixteen free scholars "to be taught and instructed in the art of grammar for ever." For more than a hundred years the corporation kept the master down to his twenty marks, carrying all the surplus to the common fund; but in 1696 a suit was instituted by the Bishop of London, and ultimately the property was placed in the hands of trustees, the master receiving the whole of the proceeds. The old school in Culver-street, however, was closed in 1853, and the present building in the Lexden-road, in the style of the fifteenth century, was opened in that year. In consequence of this outlay, and the deficiency of the sum subscribed by the town, the endowment—now about £100. a year—has been reduced by one half for the period of 30 years. The twenty pupils

are selected by the mayor and aldermen, and the master is allowed to take sixty pay scholars. Two foundations at Cambridge, in connexion with this school, were founded by Robert Lewis, in 1620, for which he left £100., which the master and fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge, paid to the corporation on condition of their paying an annuity of £7. towards the maintenance of a free scholar from this school. Ambrose Gilbert left property to found a fellowship and a scholarship, for the benefit of—first, the Gilberts, then the Forkingtons, then Colchester school, lastly Orsett and Essex. In the foundation of four scholarships by R. Scrivener, this school is named.

The Blue Coat School, as it is called, for children of the church of England, was instituted in 1808 and 1809, by a subscription, and is still partly maintained by the same means; but it has from time to time acquired endowments and received legacies, the latter of which have been in many cases invested. In particular, William Naggs, in 1747 gave an estate of 26a. 2r. 23p. at Wickham St. Pauls, to educate and clothe four boys, and apprentice two annually; Sarah Edwards, in 1770, left £500 to clothe and maintain one boy and one girl; and Edward Snell, in 1786, left £240 for apprenticing poor boys. The income of the charity is £100. The children are educated in the National schools, with which the institution was connected in 1812, but they are clothed, and several are annually apprenticed. New schools are about to be erected.

Winsley's almshouses, in the Fingrinhoe-road, consisting of 18 tenements and a chapel, were founded by Alderman Arthur Winsley, by his will dated 1726, and endowed with Brick-house farm, Colchester, and Bocking-hall farm, in West Mersea. Brick-house farm was sold for barracks in 1805, and Barn-hall farm was purchased. The original number of almshouses was twelve, but by a decree of Chancery they have been increased to eighteen; the number of inmates, mostly decayed tradesmen, farmers, &c., or their daughters and wives, is 22, each of whom receives 6s. a week and coals. Kendall's almshouses may be called an offshoot of Winsley's, John Kendall, a benevolent quaker, and his wife, having originally founded them in 1791, for the widows of men who had dwelt in Winsley's, and who on the death of their husbands were compelled to quit. There have since been various benefactions and bequests. In 1804 the number of apartments was doubled, and they now consist of comfortable homes for 16 alms-women, who have 3s. a week each, and a chaldron of coals. The late Alderman Wire has bequeathed £500. to establish two additional houses.

Winnock's almshouses, in the same road, were erected by John Winnock, a baymaker, during his lifetime, about 1679, for six "ancient and orderly poor persons, who receive no alms or collection from any parish whatsoever." He endowed them with a rent-charge; and the ownership of the property afterwards came to the trustees. The institution has been increased by various gifts and bequests, and the number of inmates is now 16, the widows of decayed tradesmen, who receive a stipend of 3s. a week and coals. The Hospital of St. Mary Magdalene is properly an almshouse. It was originally founded for lepers in the reign of Henry I.; fell to the crown at the Reformation; and was re-founded by James I. for a master and five poor persons—the master to have the cure of souls of the parishioners. The hospital became dilapidated; and about 80

years ago a range of six new alms-houses was built on the site: the houses are occupied by widows, who have 52s. a year each and fagots; and the remainder of the proceeds of the property, which is considerable, goes to the master, as incumbent of the parish.

Once in 24 years the corporation receives £104. under the will of Sir Thomas White, who in 1556 left £2,000. to the corporation of Bristol to purchase an estate, and from the proceeds to pay £104. to 24 towns in annual succession—£100. of it to be lent in sums of from £25. to £100. to young free-men of honest fame, without interest, for ten years, and the £4. goes to the trustees. The fund now amounts to £475. which is applied according to the directions of the donor.—J. Daniel, in 1695, left a £10. rent-charge out of Hanging-pond field, to be applied, £3. to St. Peter, £3. to St. Giles, £2. to St. Botolph, and £2. to St. Mary-at-the-Walls, in the distribution of coals. St. Botolph and St. Giles have each £2. 12s. out of a farm at Goldhanger, left by an unknown donor.

In St. James's the poor have the dividends of £125. stock, left by Elizabeth Jacob, in 1801; and the dividends of £151. from a bequest of Susannah Hammant, in 1826.

In St. Leonard's, an acre of land from an unknown donor.

In All Saints', the dividends of £100. stock, left by William Goodwin, in 1828, for the repair of his tomb and the poor.

In St. Peter's, the dividends of £82. 15s. 2d. stock, left for the poor by John Moore, in 1809; and the dividends of £166. 13s. 4d., left by John Mills, in 1822.

In Lexden, a rent-charge of £5. 4s. left by Sir J. Swinnerton, in 1616, out of Chitts Hill farm, for distribution in bread; and £2. 10s. from Love's charity (before noticed).

In St. Nicholas are eight almshouses, occupied by widows, who receive 2s. per week. There were originally four, founded in 1552, by Ralph Fynche, a brewer, who endowed them with a rent-charge of £6. 6s. 8d. for "impotent and poore inhabitants, men or women, dwelling in the parish of St. Nicholas, and being of good name and fame." Legacies were subsequently received from Henry Dobby and Charles Great. About 25 years ago, in consequence of the receipt of £1,000. under the will of William Goodwin, the houses were rebuilt and increased to eight. William Goodwin had previously left the dividends of £262. 10s. stock to increase the stipends of the almspeople. John Pryor, also, in 1800, left the dividends of £500. stock, and the interest of £250., a part to be applied to these almshouses, a part to the minister of the Wesleyan chapel in Culver-street, for the distribution of bread and other purposes.—The poor have also a rent-charge of 40s. left by George Wegg, in 1745.

In Holy Trinity parish there are ten of the almshouses, of which there are several in Colchester, said to have never been endowed, or if so, the endowment is now undiscoverable. These were built in Eld-lane, by Lady Darcy, who lived here in the time of Charles I. The parish has five acres of land; and the poor have a rent-charge of £3. left by Lady Creffield, in 1734.

# A P P E N D I X .

## SHERIFFS OF ESSEX.

Prior to the 9th of Elizabeth the Sheriffs acted both for Essex and Herts. In that year a Sheriff was first appointed for Essex alone; but few of the present living families appear in the old list. In the 14th of that reign we find Sir Thos. Mildmay, Knight, of Moulsham, filled that office; 17th, Sir John Petre, of Writtle and Ingatestone; 35th, Humfrey Mildmay, Esq., of Danbury; 39th, Thomas Mildmay, Esq., of Moulsham.

*James I.*—1st, Sir Henry Maynard, Knight, of Little Easton; 13th, William Smijth, Esq., of Theydon Mount.

*Charles I.*—4th, Henry Mildmay, Esq., of Woodham Walter.

*Charles II.*—4th, Sir Thomas Abdy, Bart., of Kelvedon; 8th, John Sparrow, Esq., of Great Maplestead; 16th, Sir Thomas Smijth, Bart., of Theydon Mount; 19th, Stephen Soame, Esq., of Haydon; 32nd, Richard Barrett, Esq., of Belhus; 33rd, Sir Edmund Smijth, Bart., of Hill Hall.

*William and Mary.*—2nd, John La Mott Honywood, Esq., of Marks Hall; 7th, Edward Bullock, Esq., of Faulkborne Hall; 11th, Samuel Wake, Esq.,

*Anne.*—2nd, Edward Bullock, Esq., of Faulkbourne; 5th, Dacre Barrett-Lennard, Esq., of Belhus; 12th, Carew H. Mildmay, Esq., of Marks.

*George II.*—7th, Champion Branfill, Esq., of Upminster; 15th, O. Beauvoir, Esq., of Downham; 17th, Thomas Ashhurst, Esq., of Hedingham Castle; 18th, Peter Du Cane, Esq., of Great Coggeshall; 20th, Nicholas Corsellis, Esq., of Wyvenhoe; 23rd, John Tyrell, Esq., of Herongate; 31st, John Henniker, Esq., of Dunmow; 33rd, Thomas Tower, Esq., of South Weald.

*George III.*—1st, Sir Charles Smyth, Bart., of Theydon; 4th, John Wilkes, Esq., of Wenden Lofts; 5th, Sir William Mildmay, Bart.

The following have been Sheriffs during the present century :—

1800. George Lee, Esq.	1832. J. T. Selwin, Esq., Down Hall,
1801. John Archer Houlton, Esq.	1833. R. Birch Wolfe, Esq., Wood Hall
1802. Robert Raikes, Esq.	1834. J. Round, Esq., Danbury Park
1803. Stephen Fryer Gillum, Esq.	1835. G. W. Gent, Esq., Moyns Park
1804. William Palmer, Esq.	1836. Wm. Whitaker Maitland, Esq.
1805. James Reed, Esq.	1837. J. Bullock, Esq., Faulkbourne
1806. James Urmston, Esq.	1838. William Cotton, Esq., Walwoods
1807. William Matthew Raikes, Esq.	1839. J. F. Mills, Esq., Lexden Park
1808. John Coggan, Esq., Wanstead	1840. C. T. Tower, Esq., Weald Hall
1809. J. R. Abdy, Esq.	1841. John Archer Houlton, Esq.
1810. John Rigg, Esq.	1842. J. F. Fortescue, Esq., Writtle Lodge
1811. Charles Smith, Esq., Suttons	1843. H. J. Conyers, Esq., Copt Hall
1812. Sir Robert Wigram, Bart.	1844. S. B. Bocket, Esq., Spains Hall
1813. R. J. Brassey, Esq., Great Ilford	1845. George Round, Esq., Colchester
1814. Robert Wilson, Esq., Woodhouse	1846. J. H. Whiteman, Esq., the Grove
1815. L. Walford, Esq., Little Bardfield	1847. W. C. Marsh, Esq., Gaynes Park
1816. Nicholas Pearse, Esq., Loughton	1848. B. B. Colvin, Esq., Manghams
1817. John Hall, Esq., Woodford	1849. Onley Savill Onley, Esq., Stisted
1818. John T. Daubuz, Esq., Leyton	1850. T. B. Western, Esq., Felix Hall
1819. John Wilkes, Esq., Wenden Lofts	1851. W. P. Honywood, Esq., Marks H.
1820. Sir T. Neave, Bart., Dagnam Park	1852. Sir C. C. Smith, Bart., Suttons
1821. R. Westley Hall, Esq., Ilford	1853. J. G. Rebow, Esq., Wyvenhoe
1822. Sir G. H. Smyth, Bart., Berechurch	1854. Thos. White, Esq., Wethersfield
1823. J. Joliffe Tufnell, Esq., Langleys	1855. J. Watlington Perry Watlington, Esq., Moor Hall
1824. Nathaniel Garland, Esq., Ramsey	1856. Robert Hills, Esq., Colne Park
1825. P. Du Cane, Esq., Braxted Lodge	1857. J. F. Wright, Esq., Kelvedon Hall
1826. F. Nassau, Esq., St. Osyth Priory	1858. O. Hanbury, Esq., Holfield Grange
1827. Sir J. Tyrell, Bart., Boreham House	1859. C. Russell, Esq., Upminster Hall
1828. Sir C. J. Smith, Bart., Suttons	1860. G. H. Errington, Esq., Colchester
1829. Brise Pearse, Esq., Monkams	1861. George Alan Lowndes, Esq., Barrington Hall
1830. Capel Cure, Esq., Blake Hall	
1831. William Davis, Esq., Leyton	

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## NOTE.

In the Witham charities we find that the payment of Dr. Warley's bequest for bread out of the poor rates has ceased, as it was not a legal charge, but the portion of Lady Barnardiston's charity, which formerly went to the poor rates, is now distributed in coals; the allowance to the widows in Green's almshouses has been increased to 3s. per week, besides which wood and coals are supplied, and the surplus of the fund is spent for the use of the church. The value given of this vicarage includes the glebe.

In the Barking charities the bequest of John Hayes, Esq., should have been stated at £4,000.

The manor and estates at Loughton passed, we find, from the Whitaker to the Maitland family by will, not by marriage.

There are also two or three typographical errors which we wish to correct. At page 484 the owner of Albyns is described as "Esq." instead of "Bart.;" at page 183 the church in which the body of Queen Caroline rested at Colchester should have been "St. Peter's" instead of "St. Runwald's;" at page 276 "Hogarth" should have been "Ogbourne;" and at page 372 "Southcote" is misprinted "Heathcote."



# WEDNESDAY'S EXCURSION OF THE SOCIETY. Aug 2, 1882.

At 10 a.m., the morning being bright and promising, a party of about 60 ladies and gentlemen assembled in the Castle Bailey, the rendezvous for the occasion, and started in eight brakes and carriages for the projected day of Archaeological pleasuring. Proceeding through the High Street and up the London Road, we have no doubt many who "turned out to see," for the nonce wished themselves Archaeologists, or, at all events, among the party. Turning up the Coggeshall Road, the excursionists drove on to Chappel, where the fine Viaduct, as a specimen of modern architecture, having been the subject of general attention, the first halt was made, and while drivers and horses refreshed themselves, a visit was paid to the Church—a somewhat poor and plain little structure of a debased Norman type, which consequently elicited few remarks of a favourable or interesting character. Driving along the pretty Valley of the Colne, with its fine timber, and pleasant country houses, and leaving the long range of Chalkney Wood on the left, the company skirting the long wall of Colne Priory, and passing a little gateway of antique construction in the wall near the entrance, and then the larger gateway near the house, on which are various carved figures, brought and placed there from the old Priory or Church, were received at the entrance to the present structure, now called Colne Priory, by Mr. and Mrs. Carwardine, its esteemed proprietor and occupants. By their most kind hospitality, they were regaled with light refreshments in both hall and dining-room. Those in the hall were served on a table cloth formerly belonging to Lord Cromwell. While partaking of refreshments so kindly pressed upon them, they were also regaled by the sight of many ancient pictures, some by T. Phillips, R.A., and interesting family portraits. Mr. Carwardine conducted his guests into the Cloisters, built by recumbent effigies of the Earls de Vere, where the effigies of Henry I., where 13 of these, however, have been mutilated or destroyed by the vicissitudes of age and at the destruction of the Monastery. The Church, and when that was destroyed, they were consigned to their present resting place in a kind of alabaster, they were carved by Italian artists, and along with fragments of ecclesiastical sculpture, now all treasured with care from further demolition. Mr. Carwardine, in the company of his visitors, had a collection of most interesting documents, a marriage statement, dated 1550, a sheet showing the armigerous crest of the Carwardine family, which would not permit of these treasures of the Priory being left of the old Priory. The house, by an old pigeon house, was out of the question. The leaders of the party, however, remained the visitors, and out the long procession, the long procession was inadvisable. The party went on to the singular bold character of the building, which caused many a remark on the features of the building, the lakenden, the building, who occupied the building, has relief, presented in the building, succeeded in the building, of the building, another building, The building, L. building, C.









